

Art and Education in Contemporary Culture

IRVING KAUFMAN

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To My Wife Mabel

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Preface

A BOOK about art and the teaching of art skirts pretentiousness for, in a very basic sense, art communicates on its own level while the successful teaching of art remains a very personal affair. The arts are felt directly through the individual senses, emotions, and perceptions. They are created in unique and complex ways, while teaching is largely a sequence of particular interpersonal relationships achieving its most desirable condition during the subjective I-thou dialogue of which Martin Buber wrote. To reduce these emotional and sensual characteristics to words is to do them a disservice, unless it is through poetry, for they tend to become adulterated. Yet arbitrary convention and academic propriety often veil the directness of art and the methods of its teaching. This, at the very least, suggests that it is important to lift the veil wherever possible and to point to some of the external conditions and attributes when these can be recognized.

This process cannot always be a simple or a straightforward one; the elements involved are frequently intangible and just as often inconsistent. To speak of sensitivity and awareness, both basic to the making, appreciating, or teaching of art is to grapple with amorphous shadowy attributes of human nature that dangerously approach meaninglessness because of their generality and tendency toward cliché presentation. These qualities, however, are much more important as objects of examination than all the skills and techniques of art and education. They deserve an emphasis just as the aesthetic factors of art education are to be stressed over and above the description of appearances and procedures. Imaginative and intrinsically significant qualities make art and good art teaching meaningful. These are often devious in their development and uncovering them may also lack a logical directness. Intuition more nearly comes to the heart of the process.

Consequently, there is much that is implied in the book and little that is objectively explicable. The lack of precision in some of the writing mirrors some of the contingency and openness that are inherent aspects of art and teaching. Furthermore, the book may itself suffer from occasional inconsistencies, if not even paradoxes that remain somewhat unresolved. There will be repetitions and perhaps important omissions, though

the latter are inadvertent. The repetitions, however, are deliberate, but have been hopefully put into varying contexts, each time to stress the author's belief in the significance of a certain idea. For instance, the reference to the individual and subjective nature of understanding or the triviality of aesthetic concerns in a technological society are frequently mentioned. These among several others are the underlying concepts the author presents as inescapable philosophical propositions that any teacher, either a specialist or an elementary classroom teacher, is obliged to give some consideration.

The book, therefore, is not within the style or tradition of most texts. It does not pretend to cover the entire area of art education, but it does deal with major philosophical concepts derived from contemporary living. At times the relevance of these concepts to art education is demonstrated, at other times there are allusions to them in looser terms, and the pertinency of the relationship is left for the reader to determine. This reflects the inherent condition of art and its teaching in that the creative processes characteristic of both are open and continuing, finding resolution only in the symbolic behavior and critical merit of an individual, and then only for a period of time, rather than forever.

It is hoped the book will raise more questions than it answers, its content should act as the provoking gadfly impelling one to action, its reading a kind of "jumping off" point for the individual reader to seek his own answers. A further hope is that the book will serve as a means of relating prospective and student teachers to the more ineffable contributions an art education methods class or instructor provides. The latter should act as the necessary link between the teasing, puzzling, perhaps vague realization of some idea in the book and its resolution through discussion or personal involvement with art materials and classroom pupils.

A text in art education cannot hope to offer definitive guides nor should it, given the nature of art education. *The primary responsibility for the development of an efficacious and positive philosophy of art teaching lies with the student.* The instructor can only point up relationships, demonstrate various approaches, stimulate uncertain interest, and otherwise act as benevolent guide. In the final analysis, however, the student discovers his or her own understanding and values, creating subsequent contexts within which unique teaching methods unfold. These are fundamentally the product of a direct and committed involvement with the form of art and its materials, and with an enthusiastic search for insight, most often accompanied with a sense of passion.

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I. K.

Preface

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The General Responsibilities of Art Teaching

Educate or abdicate.

JOHN FOWLES

TEACHERS and teaching have always been lively topics for wits, savants, and for fools as well. Like the weather and taxes, they draw observations from those professionally involved and from every other imaginable source. They are lauded and condemned in a wide variety of guises; the prospective teacher has literally volumes of advice and comment from all and sundry from which to accept insight, develop understanding, and establish an individual direction. In the past G. B. Shaw wagged a finger in their faces when he wrote that, "He who can, does. He who cannot, teaches." The provoking critic of American life, H. L. Mencken was sarcastically caustic in his barbs, "The average schoolmaster is and always must be essentially an ass, for how can one imagine an intelligent man engaging in so puerile an avocation?" He does not even grant teaching the status of a vocation! Yet Henry Adams, the prophetic late nineteenth century writer was moved to say, "A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops." In a more contemporary setting, the importance of teaching and the dedicated merits of teachers are daily voiced in increasing acclaim through many communication sources. The remarks may be sober or hilarious, entertaining and enlightening, but they do little, unfortunately, to assist a teacher in the necessary, day-to-day happenings in a classroom.

The concerns of any and all teachers span a wide range; the elements on the list of their responsibilities are numerous in addition to being diverse. There is primarily, the subject to be taught—a body of knowledge or a series of processes in specific areas with all of the attendant emphases on currently pertinent content and method. There is the recognition of individual needs of particular students, necessitating an understanding of psychology and the human developmental apparatus as well as a sensitivity to the general requirements of class or ethnic groups, presuming a sociological insight. There are the shared aspects of school policy that have to

be considered along with the larger commitment to community and national welfare. The physical responsibility for the classroom, the equipment and the supplies may not appear excessive at first glance, but when seen against the mounting spread, the proportions of the job may become individually harassing. Add to this the development of communication skills, the requirements of patience, integrity, good will, and an indefinite number of supplementary yet indispensable teaching attributes and the list takes on almost an omniscient quality.

The pressures from both inside and outside the school make themselves felt. Society, on one hand, insists upon its own reflection and expression in education through the transmittal and conservation of the accumulated store of traditional knowledge. This is somewhat complicated when a new "takeover generation," as *Life* magazine characterizes it, arrives periodically on the scene, assessing the old in terms of the new, asking fresh questions, posing novel problems and expecting answers and resolutions that may differ radically from preceding understanding. On the other hand, individual pupils may evidence considerable deviation from normal and common behavioral patterns, throwing out of focus the pragmatically acceptable methods that are successful with groups. The strong influences of unique differences may be of such a compelling nature that even when collective approaches are refined and sophisticated through the efforts of group dynamics, the individual needs may not be fully met. In addition, ineffectual learning, the large dropout rate, the delinquency of many adolescents, and similar conditions attest to this as a continuing state of affairs. Then, the explicit pressures of content must be implemented in the everyday lessons of the classroom. This concentration on the subject bedrock of teaching is being fostered while the larger and more implicit means and ends of learning hover about alternately, like benign or annoying disturbances depending upon the cast of a teacher's attitudes. Someone has called the elementary teacher the last of the encyclopedists, while those on the higher levels must figuratively match wits with a Picasso and an Einstein in their daily lessons. Teachers obviously have a rather heavy accounting—to the subject or subjects they teach, to the students, to the school, to the community, and not least, to themselves as well.

THE NEED FOR EVALUATION OF TEACHER TRAINING

To create an image of the ideal teacher may be a worthwhile and inspirational assignment, but it is a frightening one as well. The "hero image" may be as tentative and as misleading as the most dogmatic and negatively drawn portrait of an incompetent or bad teacher. The merits, in either instance, are essentially relative, the good and the bad depending upon the particular perspective of the one who is judging.

Yet, even when they are agreed upon generally, the qualities of good teaching, let alone ideal teaching, do not coincide consistently with what actually does occur in the classroom. Some of this may be due to the changing emphases of the environment, a reorientation in thinking that has

become apparent over the past couple of decades though its dynamics have always been present. The sometimes unavoidable time lag between advanced theory and implementation in the schools and colleges eventually closes; though in past history, education has suffered from a wide time gap that was not bridged for long periods. The teaching deficiencies accumulate, in some instances to an appalling degree. The education resources may also have been stretched past their limits in an ever increasing attempt to provide good teaching for a never ending stream of pupils. The store of good teachers may have been depleted beyond an earlier proportion, pointing up a weakness in the educational system on all levels. This requires a fresh and continuing examination which should result in positive measures.

Despite the sense of commitment and the serious concerns of our colleges and training institutions, the needed qualities of background, broad understanding, and developed sensibilities are not always adequately provided for either in a formal or an informal sense. Some of the faulty and misdirected teaching probably stems from partial training that bungles along with peacune and unsuitable interests. The development of the prospective teacher takes on a tangential quality. There is either an insufficient involvement with the fundamental aspects of the area that is to be taught or an inordinate stress is put upon relatively inappropriate and trivial aspects of educational method. Not enough attention is paid to the kind of person that would be most adept at teaching or educationally supporting that person with the necessary academic, humanistic, and professional substance. It is true that there is no common consensus that delineates the necessary characteristics of the good teacher. This does not excuse the attempts of some colleges to train individuals by local fiat and pious philosophizing, sanctioning the procedure through a prescriptive proliferation of broadly generalized methods courses that paradoxically invite a tight structuring. J. D. Salinger, in his novel, *Franny and Zooey* says, "Scratch an incompetent school teacher—for that matter, college professor—and half the time you find a displaced first-class automobile mechanic. . . ." The teaching of method is not sufficient nor is the rote recital of abstract aims. It is not only the old idea of putting a square peg in a round hole, but the more current one of determining if, indeed, the hole is round or the peg is square. Knowledge in understanding the mechanics of teaching and learning is not too definitively formed but this need not stop experienced instructors, at least intuitively from assessing the attributes and potential worth of a prospective teacher and acting upon these insights; in fact, students themselves have to be encouraged in this kind of honest self appraisal. The resultant thinking may lead to the kind of evaluative guidelines by which education as a profession can greatly benefit.

In the final analysis, there is probably no substitute for the individual responsibility of each student who has to assess the worth of the education he or she is being exposed to, not only in objective terms, but in the more fundamental and subjective ones and through the realization of actual educational experience. This may not be more true in art education than any

other area. But the eager and enthusiastic promise of students in teacher training, despite sincere and often conscientious instruction for the most part, founders on the uncertainties and insecurities as well as the challenges of actual art teaching. Herbert Gold, the novelist, in writing about his own teaching experience comments, ". . . it happens that most misty exaltation of the blessed vocation of the teacher issues from the offices of deans, editors, and college presidents. The encounter with classroom reality has caused many teachers, like Abelard meeting the relatives of Eloise, to lose their bearings."¹ Nevertheless, an art teacher much like a producing artist must do something, creating concrete learning situations as the artist fashions concrete forms in particular media. This something has to be done every day, as long as the teacher is in a classroom with students, again like the painter in front of an empty canvas or a sculptor eyeing a bin full of unformed clay. Though learning may be superficially intangible, its actual process in the classroom is real enough. Procrastination and negligence rarely can be accepted for any length of time, either by the pupil or the teacher (or the artist for that matter). If there is to be teaching or an expression through a work of art, there has to be interaction between the artist and material or the teacher and pupils. In a rather profound sense then, an art teacher has a responsibility that cannot easily be evaded, that of concretely influencing a student, hopefully in a creative manner. Perhaps each teacher requires her own ideal image, a model to emulate, to achieve this positive awareness and to channel art teaching in imaginative and successful ways, but there can be no utopian concept that suffices for everyone. Students, at least in retrospect, are unconsciously aware of the tentativeness, the demands, and the uncertainties of teaching in any subject. William B. Yeats knowingly captures this attitude in his short poem, "Gratitude to the Unknown Instructors":²

What they undertook to do
They brought to pass,
All things hang like a drop of dew
Upon a blade of grass.

THE FLEXIBLE IMAGE OF THE ART TEACHER

The inherent demands and responsibilities of teaching art run parallel with the other areas of a school curriculum on one general level. On another level the particular qualities of art insist upon unique understanding which cannot always be gleaned from the broad educational picture. There is a network of interrelating factors in art teaching which must be accounted for, either deliberately in the way the teacher approaches both the subject and the class, or more indirectly, in the way the teacher experiences the world. The personality of any art teacher is bound up with both the more objective educational implements of art and creative method as

¹ Herbert Gold, "A Dog in Brooklyn, A Girl in Detroit," *Encounter*, January 1963, p. 20.

² William B. Yeats, *Collected Poems* (New York: Macmillan, 1936), p. 249.

well as inherent subjective elements. The former have their own distinctive characteristics which are basically understood best in their own particular terms, while the latter are involved with broad psychological insights.

Yet teaching in a general sense is a means of translation. This is a common philosophical point underlying all educational speculation as it is in the specific instance of art teaching. Insight into the particular concerns of an individual area may be gained from informed and pertinent though general examination. The initial point that could be made is that the teacher is the prism through which the student views some segment of knowledge and existence. The viewing is significantly determined in as yet little understood ways by the figurative prism of the teacher. There are infinite modifications, distortions, and surfaces to the prism, each finally existing as a unique interpretive device.

The teacher becomes a ready channel toward significant experience, her personality focused for educational purposes or intensified in interpersonal terms of student growth. If there is more than usual clarity or depth of intensity, the student is fortunate in his teacher. Perhaps an intangible intrigue of character, a unique and unusual disposition, can provide worth to the prism, provoking stimulation in the student as well as the more acceptable image of the confident and normal teaching personality. However, if the uniqueness of the image is blunted by an assembly-line conformity, a rigidity based on doctrinaire assumptions, a timid projection of personal dynamics, or any other of a large list of congenital or imposed defects, then the student is faced with a confused vision and may not have the level of educational experience he deserves. The teacher then, is one of the key factors in developing a positive educational climate. This is perhaps even more true in the teaching of art to children than in the teaching of other subjects due to the symbolic, emotional, and otherwise intangible characteristics of art. The lack of conceptual structure in art and the exceedingly personal nature of its activity stress the psychology of behavior, the interpersonal relationship, and the uniqueness of the aesthetic experience.

The Subject as Focus

However, there are some who argue that the prism, the channel toward creative understanding, is not the teacher, but is rather the subject. This is a valid idea and as easily justifiable an argument as the above approach. No matter who the teacher is, the argument insists, it is through art or history or mathematics, through the discipline of a particular subject, that the student is coming to grips with knowledge and its consequences in living. It is through the particular attributes and characteristic qualities of art or of any other subject area that the student grows and becomes aware of the world, preparing his response to it and for his place in it, creating finally a personal and authentic sense of existence. Obviously, this must also be accepted as a genuine philosophical tenet. The two ideas are not really antithetical to one another, though at different times and in different places, the stress is either upon one or the other.

The teacher's awareness and understanding of art is largely based upon direct, personal experience with the materials and processes of visual symbol making. These are primary influences in the development of a creative teaching method.

In art education, for instance, prior to this century and well into its early decades, art in the schools emphasized rigid exercise techniques, neatly pinning down the manner in which the student was to be led to a mastery of the subject. The teacher provided the drill and lessons. After the turn of the century under the influence of the art for art's sake movement and the later support of progressive education, the actual creative process itself was stressed as a psychological means of inducing desired growth in students. The teacher became more important as a beneficent guide and interpreter. However, when a relatively undisciplined self-expression became the dominant note in art education, the art teacher became little more than a dispenser of materials. Though this is grossly oversimplified and offered without value judgment, it demonstrates the swings in educational fashion which frequently overstate a position and do not arrive at a balance or a synthesis of contributing educational factors.

The pupil-teacher relationship resolves itself essentially as translation, interpretation, interaction, exposure, and mutual learning; the teacher and the subject area both contributing to the educational process the student is experiencing. The subject area is the core that informs, excites and enriches the student, providing for the creative growth of the individual both in imaginative and in rational terms. The teacher facilitates



this process, offering motivation, stimulation, and value judgments, serving as a resource person in the best sense without finality or absolute authority. Both the objective study of course content and the factor of individual teaching idiosyncracies form the prism through which the individual student apprehends the conditions of his environment and his own nature. In this manner, the student achieves knowledge and perhaps insight and is given the means with which to act, perhaps creatively.

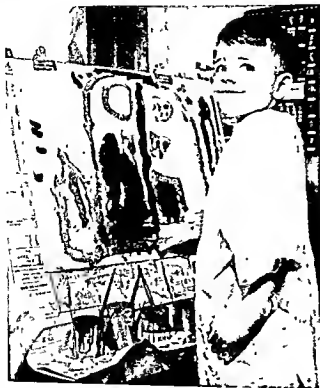
Individual Emphasis of Method

It appears to follow that there is no abstractly correct way of teaching, just as there is no really ideal type of teacher or objectively unchanging course of study. At least, in the teaching of art, it would be difficult, if not educationally disastrous, to narrowly define classroom methods. However, there may be suggested procedures, the interchange of various individual teaching insights that lend themselves to a common formulation and a list of desirable attributes which hopefully would help produce a successful teacher. There is a range of information and a projected insight into process that assists in sensitizing the basic characteristics of teaching. Yet, to deliberately predetermine the main body of these characteristics of method and personality in art education may also do violence to the essentially fluid structure of art and its encompassing qualities.

This may seem a paradox, or a contradiction, perhaps even an evasion of responsibility. After all a text book in art education, designed to assist teachers in the teaching of art, may be expected to offer not only the "whys" of teaching art, but its "hows" as well. Yet, because of the unique nature of art, its novel and constantly forming structure, and because of the open-ended character of the creative process which feeds on the rebellious, obstreperous, and unconventional as well as on accepted rational and ordered understanding, the "how" aspect cannot be closely defined and categorically offered as a contained body of information.

Each teacher develops his or her own skills of communication and interaction. This coupled with a mature yet unique set of attitudes offers the most natural and salutary means of teaching children. Enneched in the subject area by participation, exposure, and learning as well as through the intrinsic and differing factors of personality, the teacher need not resort to a doctrinaire "how to" manipulation of materials, nor depend upon the shallow and self-defeating "bag of tricks" with which to entice students, ostensibly providing creative experiences, but in reality, merely conforming to the expected, the unadventurous, and the essentially uncreative. Each prospective art teacher has too much positive and exciting internal resources to have to turn to narrowly, preformed notions as the basis of their teaching method and content. These have been arbitrarily organized by others who cannot have the faintest inkling of the conditions, the understanding and the attitudes to be found in even one other classroom that may be hundreds of miles away physically, or more important, psychologically removed from the premises of the predetermined experience.

*Students on all
levels discover
meanings and
satisfying personal
experiences through
direct involvement
with art (Toledo
Public Schools,
PHOTO Tom
O'Reilly)*



What is required, if any honest and pertinent meaning is to be achieved in the teaching of art, is a bringing together of the varying factors—the subject of art itself, an understanding of and an active involvement in the creative process, a comprehension of the underlying educational philosophy as well as of the methods currently employed or those proposed for the future, all synthesized in a mature development of individual personality. This has to be further seen in context, against the backdrop of a liberal examination of twentieth century life, its minus qualities as well as its positive attributes. Though artistic understanding and creativeness are basically the consequence of subjective qualities, objective factors cannot be ignored. The art teacher, perhaps even more than the artist, has to be overtly aware of the surrounding culture and its influences in education. A personal philosophy is called for, not arrived at by default or puerile mimicry, but through the alert realization of individual characteristics that implicitly shape attitudes as well as the explicit elements of culture that may direct them. This can lead to abstract and often controversial philosophical concerns. It may, at first, appear remote to discuss such considerations; yet how we teach is either the conscious or unconscious result of the personal philosophy to which we are heir. The very way we conduct ourselves in the classroom, the actual teaching quality that is acted out rather than just thought about, are attempts in a personalized manner to gratify existing philosophical viewpoints, whether they are narrowly biased or openly speculative. If we deliberately ignore the theoretical supports of art and education and the attendant personal influences of emotional and intuitive forces for the more immediately practical and objective methods, the consequences may be the manipulation of students rather than the teaching of individuals.

The teaching of art, to reiterate, is part of the broad stream of an educational heritage and procedure which share common problems requiring

common resolutions. Yet, it is also a rather special and even extraordinary happening because of its highly unique nature and its stress upon singular creative expressiveness. The subject matter is innately exciting. It is frequently intangible in its psychological impact, consistently reaching the emotions; it is provocative and pleasing, ambiguous yet concrete in form, spanning the objectively intellectual and the subjectively feeling components of experience. An art teacher has to encompass not only these qualities of art, but relate to the rest of the curriculum and the individual student as well. The necessity for a continuing and open kind of resolution speaks for itself.

It is not intended that a strictly dichotomous choice be presented to the prospective teachers between predetermined, rigid structure on one end and a free, creative process on the other. This in itself predetermines a situation which requires individual and sensitive appraisal. At some points, a structured determination may be quite necessary to an art lesson or the development of a student's understanding. However, unless the art teacher approaches the teaching act with a spontaneity that characterizes an act of discovery, the preformed concepts degenerate into unexamined and meaningless forms, safe and secure, but without the verve and elan that creative expression insists upon.

In this sense, unless the open quality of creative expression and aesthetic resolution are genuinely operating, there is an imposition of values either as

The free exploratory and playful expressiveness of the early elementary child is a natural condition that should be encouraged in the classroom [Toledo Public Schools; PHOTO Tom O'Reilly]



tiresome exhortation or a doctrinaire methodology, which even if it advocates a free approach, denies it the natural immediacy of its character.

THE NECESSARY PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES IN ART TEACHING

The art teacher's personal image should be a mature and profound one though spiced with the humor that makes for positive relationships. It should also reflect those broad and open qualities which make teaching a socially constructive and personally creative vocation. Without engaging in a homily that could be both tedious and moralistic, these qualities may be briefly summed up in the following manner by expanding upon four basic personality attributes; awareness, inspiration, empathy, and knowledge.

1. *Art teachers must be persons of awareness if they are to alert students to their own capabilities and potential.* Too many people in contemporary culture live in a climate of indifference and vagueness, responding most often only to the necessary or automatic inner drives and the most insistently compelling and conforming pressures from the outside. Self motivation leading to a quality of intellectual alertness and aesthetic sensitivity is not readily evidenced in large quantity in "the common man" without the prodding and stimulation of the processes of education. This is particularly true in a mass culture that emphasizes technological and other generally passive though specialized procedures. The process of awakening and growth toward maturity may be a painful one; it is more immediately satisfying to accept "what comes naturally." The average response makes little demand on an individual and since it is easier to accept the relatively painless orientation of the mediocre, too many students do so without being challenged or motivated sufficiently by teachers who themselves unwittingly accept mediocrity.

Art continues as
a serious mode of
personal expression
throughout
adolescence and
after, in response
to sensitive teaching.
[Toledo Public
Schools, photo
Tom O'Reilly]



The qualities of art, if they are to be experienced in any degree of fullness, richness, or satisfaction, make demands and insist upon efforts that are beyond the gray confines of this prevailing mediocrity. In realizing this, teachers should also appreciate what may be initially insecure and almost distressing reactions for the individual. Mature understanding implies not only insecurity, but the ability to live with it, a recognition that ordinary standards or even so called lawful conclusions may be fallible, that change is a natural condition of life. Therefore, awareness is a primary factor in a teacher's personality, particularly if the subject is art. Art is predisposed to an adventuresome attitude and a searching outlook. It combines a breadth of experience with intensity of vision based upon alert sense perceptions leading to aesthetic consciousness—an enriched way of seeing.

2. *Art teachers have to create the appropriate climate in which students may respond, learn, and create.* Another way of saying this is that teachers have to be inspirational. This is an old fashioned word that has been suspiciously regarded as a high level verbal abstraction that has no real teaching meaning behind it. As it is generally understood, this is probably justified. However, the connotations of the word ring true, despite the meaningless manner in which it has been bandied about. To inspire is to influence, and there is nothing negative in that meaning. To be an influence is one of the basic and abiding responsibilities of the art teacher. Perhaps if we slough off the supernatural or romantically immature semantic meanings it would be easier to accept the idea of teachers being inspirational without conjuring up visions of halos and sentimental dedication.

Thomas Edison in a characteristically practical though mundane quote said, "Genius is one percent inspiration and ninety-nine percent perspiration." Both genius and inspiration are often connected to art or the creative process. But even in the impractical area of art, there is a good deal of perspiration. This is not activated in the students, however, unless inspiration releases the trigger of work, no matter what the mathematics of the equation are. An individual teacher may not feel equal to the task of inspiration, pleading inadequacy or modesty. But neither one of these factors has a place in good teaching. Just as no one is great who does not think of himself as great (humility being only a cultural inversion of this), no teacher can inspire unless he feels himself capable of doing so. Obviously, teachers who do not reach out, who do not project some inner quality that students may come into easy contact with, concurrently cannot create the classroom climate in which the student may then experience art honestly, openly, and creatively on its own merits. In art education when there is an inspiring teaching quality there is, as a result, a gratifying sense of appreciation and a fulfilling sense of doing—expressing the sense of one's self in a creative form as well as communicating its unique quality to others. The teacher as a generative source not only provides external excitement and stimulation but may awaken in the student those very qualities of self motivation that grow from internal springs of inspiration.

3. *Art teachers need also to sense a relationship to other people.* Though there is growing belief, despite the spread of science, that the world is

mirrored in our own ego and that the subjective self is the necessarily fundamental judge of understanding, this does not rule out the existence or the consideration of fellow men. The self exists on a parallel plane with the sentience of others, the teachers' along side of their students. Where there is active tension or attraction in the interchange, there is a touching of personalities and a relationship is formed. This may suggest a feeling of transcendence that need not violate the sufficiency of the individual in his own ego.

Albert Camus, in accepting the Nobel Prize for literature cited this idea in a broad relationship to art:

I cannot live as a person without my art. And yet I have never set that art above everything else. It is essential to me, on the contrary, because it excludes no one and allows me to live, just as I am, on a footing with all. To me art is not a solitary delight. It is a means of stirring the greatest number of men by providing them with a privileged image of our common joys and woes. Hence it forces the artist not to isolate himself; it subjects him to the humblest and most universal truth. And the man who, as often happens, chose the path of art because he was aware of his difference soon learns that he can nourish his art, and his difference, solely by admitting his resemblance to all. The artist fashions himself in that ceaseless oscillation from himself to others, midway between the beauty he cannot do without and the community from which he cannot tear himself. This is why true artists scorn nothing. . . .³

In order to "stir the greatest number of men" teachers have to practice a balance, finding the midpoint that does not negate the sense of self, that is a "beautiful" and intrinsically necessary human condition, yet that finds and encourages an interchange with the others, to which the self is just as necessarily related. The analogy of teaching with art has many positive insights to be appreciated. The relationship established in either instance has to be open and mutual. Teaching methods should never be frozen into codified means, impersonally implemented. At times the teacher may even assume the role of student, the relationship increasing the dimensions of understanding and expression of all the participants. In all, it is necessary in the teaching of art to be cognizant of and sympathetic to the social qualities of art.

4. *Art teachers should possess pertinent knowledge and broad, understanding leading to a development of insight.* Though all teachers, in any area need a command of concepts, facts, and structure of that area, this usually implies an abstract understanding. For instance, a teacher presenting the basic ideas of algebra need not be a practicing mathematician in order to teach properly. However, though all teachers who provide art lessons for their classes need not be practicing artists in the full sense of commitment, they most certainly have to attempt some serious creative expression themselves. This is a necessity in understanding the processes of artistic appreciation and creativity and in providing an appropriate atmosphere in which expressive understanding may be achieved by students.

³ Albert Camus, "Camus at Stockholm: The Acceptance of the Nobel Prize," *Atlantic Monthly*, May 1959, pp. 33-34.

Real awareness and a resulting comprehension are developed from personal involvement. This leads to a naturally positive climate in the classroom within which students can then undergo a meaningful creative process themselves based upon sympathetic and insightful guidance. Personal expression and mature understanding that become educational insights for a teacher are no ideal goals; they are the actual stock in trade for educators.

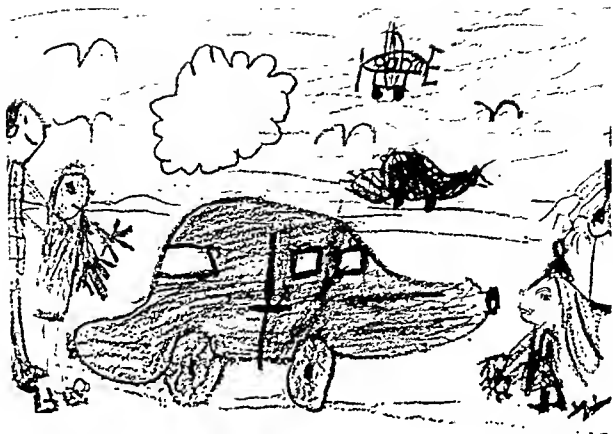
However, in art as it is in any area, this is generated and developed through effort, through personal crisis, and an immediate involvement with creative and expressive processes—an intent teaching for qualities that may not be easily apprehended or accepted with facility. Very often, the interest in an area may be the result of this effort, rather than the cause of it. In any case, without expending effort or committing himself to active participation the individual remains superficially informed: a mere dilettante. For the teacher, this is evasion of responsibility; for the creative aims of art education this may spell failure. Understanding art must take into consideration unique experience of the world outside and its creative transformation through active personal expression.

To stress these broad and encompassing personal attributes as general and fundamental conditions for successful art teaching does not rule out the desired development of unique characteristics. There are many paths that may be cut and traveled in the teaching landscape, though the essential physiognomy of the landscape is discernible. In recognizing the underlying pattern, a teacher instinctively accepts what may be the most valid and positive basis for meaningful education. In any case, the conditions stressed lay a groundwork for the kind of dialogue between teacher and student which stems from a broad and vital realization of the many actual as well as potential facets of human nature. On such a foundation the teaching of art may provide genuine personal, aesthetic, and creative experiences for everyone involved.

The listing of these attributes may be without the hard core and tangible substance that educational training frequently and properly implies. However, as long as teaching remains fundamentally an art rather than a science, particularly in the area of creativity and aesthetics, there will be no foundation for systematic listing of tangible and isolated teaching characteristics. The most that can be expected is a reiteration of what may appear to be platitudes at times, but are necessary assumptions all the same.

THE ENERGIES OF CHANGE

Of course, the educated individual would want to subject these assumptions to proper examination; teachers in addition have an obligation to do so, for they directly affect many people through subsequent action. Yet, because of its unfixed nature, some of the assumptions underlying art are difficult to dissect with any analytical nicety or controlled evaluation. This spills over into the teaching of art, forming an intuitive reservoir of understanding that presumes certain conditions. An additional one that has a large bearing in all education is that change is a constant phenomena.



Change occurs in children's art forms through developmental yet individually paced sequences.

[TOP LEFT] "Going for a Ride," First Grade Drawing: Exuberant and direct expressiveness.
[PHOTO S. Martin Friedman]

[BOTTOM LEFT] "My Classroom," Fourth Grade Drawing: A characteristic attempt to render representational surroundings.
[PHOTO Stuart Klipper]

[RIGHT] "Portrait," Eighth Grade Tissue Paper Collage: Deliberate aesthetic control and an emerging unity of feeling and form
[Ann Arbor Public Schools; PHOTO Stephen C. Sumner]



The context as well as the particular implications of society and culture, the "outside" world and its pressures as they relate to the teaching of art are frequently ignored if they do not conform to commonly accepted patterns or are related in an esoteric way. This happens despite their inherent influence and their moulding of the actual forms and essential cultural meaning of art, and by extension, the content of and the manner in which teachers present the subject (or unconsciously ignore or distort it). Consequently, change is one of the most important external conditions that has a significance in art teaching. It is part of a necessary understanding in the development of any successful teaching program and in a realization of an art content that reflects and expresses its times as well as influencing the values and tastes of students.

Change is a predominant feature in any observation of the contemporary scene. It is of increasing force in an already highly complex environment, the pull and tug of vigorous and often opposing ideas, the premium of the new, the floundering of old shibboleths and the rush of exciting discoveries. The solid supports of yesterday become the rubble of today. The sureness of tradition is shaken by the defiance of the novel and unfamiliar. At the very least, a mechanical determinism inherited from the nineteenth century is no longer regarded in the twentieth century as the effective measure while any doctrinaire philosophy has long given up being the rule whereby an intelligent observer confidently defines the world.

Many of the older values which until recently have been regarded as eternal, or at least not easily subject to change, have succumbed to the prodigious onslaught of radically new ideas and the consequent beliefs stemming from them. The solid virtues of an agrarian outlook have given way to the raw thrust of industrialism; a personal craftsmanship has become an impersonal technology. The mechanistic universe of Newton with its perfection of functioning parts has been disrupted by the disturbing theories of Einstein and later physicists. These in turn, have become the jumping-off point for a remarkable leap into new frontiers of knowledge which scientists are exploring in an ever ascending spiral of new understanding of the universe. The voyages of discovery no longer are confined to the mundane stretches of earth but avidly prove the reaches of space.

The religious ethic that bound entire societies into tightly knit groups has become a thinly maintained faith in the face of a rampant materialism and a philosophical skepticism. Politics hops, skips, and jumps around the globe with daily happenings of momentous note. All this change has infiltrated every level of living and is as much reflected in the arts, as in science and social structure. Literature expands into new dimensions with the provoking styles of a Joyce, Faulkner, or Beckett, defying accepted stylistic techniques and normal grammatical syntax; music creates novel realms of sound with revolutionary tones of Schoenberg, Cage, and other composers utilizing electronic instruments grating on the ears of the uninitiated; while the developed rules of perspective and pictorial composition become in Picasso or Pollock the impertinent abstractions of an aesthetic visual order which, unfortunately, is more like disorder to most people.

Though the variety of our altered world may animate us, it also dispossesses our security. The old search for the good, the true, and the beautiful is now an anxious grasping for identity. The way to spiritual fulfillment has been lost by the average man; the road to happiness is a devious one and the expected, desired satisfactions are not always realized. The current turmoil in education is but one manifestation of this vast cultural metamorphosis.

We may regret the loss of permanence and stubbornly cling to supposedly solid footings of absolute values. Yet even a cursory glance at our

environment would suffice to demonstrate the inexorable force of change. However, it is not only in the readily observable objective conditions of environment that change is seen. It pervades a much more fundamental strata of existence; in fact, it appears to be a universal and basic phenomenon of all matter, both organic and inorganic.

Awareness of Change

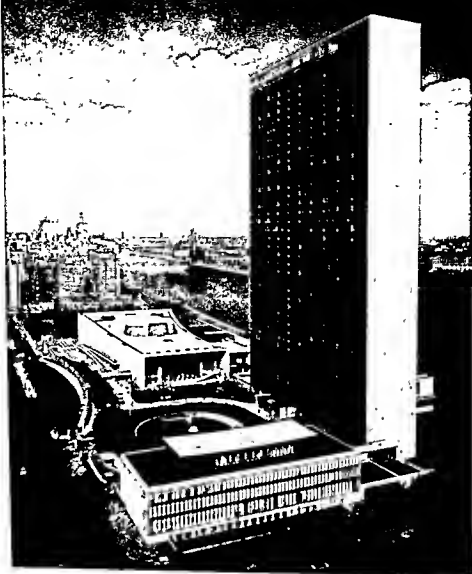
More pertinent to the understanding of a teacher is the shifting manner in which people relate to others and to the environment, the flexible and continuously emerging orientation of the individual to the world. Since most comprehension seems to derive from the way we subjectively connect the various strands of our attitudes—the image we have of ourselves against and in relationship to the conditions, pressures, and possibilities of external surroundings—the resulting vacillation and lack of permanence create basic problems of identification and meaning. It is not sufficient to express verbally and accept casually the inevitability and presence of change; an attempt has to be made to incorporate the concept of change as an intrinsic part of our mental and emotional makeup; we are compelled to live with it and to fashion our attitudes in accordance with the realities of an on going process. At the same time we cannot ignore the concrete products of the environment and the traditions they engender. Nevertheless, the very security we seek is more likely to be found in the kaleidoscopic variety and force of change than in the so-called stable and frozen aspects of an unchanging surrounding.

Obviously, if the world about us were an immobile one of fixed ideas and of permanence, the initially fixed reactions in the form of accepted symbols and assumptions would suffice for understanding and necessary action. Even the concept of permanence has now come to mean merely the rather slow moving aspect of change in some matter, that cannot be readily observed, but is there nevertheless such as the movement of land masses. Change is the rule and an understanding of its constancy a requirement in achieving a deep sense of realization appropriate to a particular time and place. The realization of change is a response to experience that is not dragging its heels, stagnating in the mistaken acceptance of relatively absolute and hidebound beliefs. Since knowledge, understanding, and process is subject to the force of change, education which attempts to teach within the framework of these factors must necessarily take it into account, stressing a liberal approach to its constituting elements.

The infinitely variegated structure of contemporary art, for instance, is based upon the uniquely qualitative and varying understanding of the creating individual. Though there may be large areas of common forms and processes that are generally agreed upon by groups, it is the singularly personal insight of an artist or a creative student in a classroom that achieves the realization of expression or the recreation of appreciation of another's work. The stream of art has developed out of this individual expression that, matured within a cultural context, possesses a dynamic quality of change. Similarly, educators have to be profoundly aware of

*Changes in the
forms and styles of
art occur because of
differences in time,
place, materials, and
cultural viewpoints*

*The United Nations
Building [PHOTO
United Nations]*



the warp of the environment, the crossing woof of experience and the unique patterns of understanding they create when figuratively woven by the individual. The art teacher has also to be aware of the tentativeness of his own understanding, the need to keep it open and receptive, if art education is to help develop the intrinsic qualities and the innate learning potential of pupils, not as conglomerates but as individual people adapting creatively to change.

Restrictive Reactions

However, the continuous flow of new information and a parallel surge of novel activity create an unnerving flux for many individuals. Because of this, the complexity of contemporary life and the multiplicity of pressures, a reaction sets in. A ridiculous example has been the advocacy of a small group of parents and educational critics in the early 1960's to return to McGuffey's readers for elementary schools. There is a restrictive reaching out for a base that grants a feeling of solidity and relief, despite its illusory nature. A quality of permanence is sought after as a foothold on meaning that does not have to be questioned. This may be understandable, but it

is a limiting desire, nevertheless. It deliberately colors ideas, circumscribes attitudes and predetermines the cast of our actions, disregarding those forces which may require new and differing means of control. The assumptions and beliefs that are held by individuals and groups tend to be continuously validated by them and preserved for as long as they serve their intended function. Any evaluation that occurs tends to be selective, filtering out new and provocative experiences, screening out those contradictions which tend to upset the traditional assumptions and the "permanent" beliefs. The process is generally below the conscious level; only extraordinary or genuinely upsetting occurrences tend to disturb the neutrality of most commonly and conservatively held opinions. Consequently, there is a quality of resistance to change. The introduction of the sciences into the curriculum experienced unprecedented hostility for a long period of time toward the second half of the last century, just as the arts today, though generally tolerated are not genuinely accepted as a necessity in the schools. Science itself was only given the recent impetus and broad support it has because of the Russian challenge.

Translated in terms of teaching methods in art, even at this late date, there are many holdovers from earlier days in the classroom. An example is the mimeographed or otherwise duplicated picture that the teacher herself has copied that is given to children to "color in." There is the continuing insistence of primarily utilizing art lessons to serve a purpose beyond itself, such as in illustrating a social studies lesson or in expressing the cliché of a holiday, or on the other end of the spectrum, a persistent dwelling upon complete self expression with no deliberate control by the teacher. There is the unconsciously selective presentation of material and projects that have filtered out the provocative and tradition destroying



*Architectural
Fragments from
Different Historical
Periods, College of
Architecture and
Design [University
of Michigan News
Service]*

qualities of contemporary art and new explorations in form. Since art rarely becomes an important enough activity for the average individual (teachers included) to experience extraordinary response, there is little opportunity for a genuine realization of the need of change. Felt more keenly in art because its values and practices are suspect anyway, the cautious bias of many educators spreads a timid and restrained attitude throughout a good part of the curriculum. This creates the impasse and the inadequacies of tight teaching, forcing a quality of educational planning that is laid down as a hard and fast doctrine, as good tomorrow as it was yesterday. Thus is underscored the stubborn commitment that so many educators have to the formulated curricula of their schools, in the conservative cast of most teachers who resist change. Fred Hechinger, in writing about teaching innovations in the *New York Times*, noted: "The startling fact—as one looks over the list of innovations . . . is that few, if any, of the experiments were begun by public school educators or, having been started, welcomed by the rank and file."



*The formal elements
and the content
of art changes
though there may
be a continuity
of expressive
intensity*

"Trellis Sunlight,"
Albert Mullen
[Courtesy of the
artist, PHOTO O E.
Nilson]



"Temptation of Christ"—Duccio di Buoninsegna. [Copy-right The Frick Collection, New York]

Education Suffers a Time Lag

Education should yield to the demands of change as readily as other areas of living. New knowledge, in our contemporary setting, however, is often suspect if it does not wear the armor of a glamourized science or the mantle of solid practically diverting entertainment. Challenging the earlier, traditional footholds creates continuing tension around education and an anxiety about its methods and goals. Yet school can no longer be regarded as the place where there is a simple transfer of the three R's from teacher to pupil. The ideas of the little red schoolhouse have long ago passed into what is for some a fond memory and for others a hopelessly antiquated concept of learning. The rise of democracy, the surge of new artistic expression, the development of science and modern technological industry over the past century have caused a major and continuing upheaval in the structure of society, in the conduct of life, in the means of knowledge and in the individual's self image. Acting upon the institutions of society, these pressures have caused a ferment of change in educational philosophy. The announced aim of providing a full education for all children, acting upon the democratic base of contemporary western life calls for a broad and enriching curriculum attuned to the particular conditions of today and providing a flexible base for the desired qualities of tomorrow. This makes urgent the need for a curriculum that favors

more than the recital of facts, the acquisition of practical skills, and a stress on narrowly intellectual factors or one that on the other end preaches "adjustment to life" in overly simple terms that gloss over the demands of the intellect and the creative imagination.

However, there is the seemingly intrinsic gap of time between the forces of a growing society, the pertinent utterances of philosophers, and the oftentime grudging implementation of change in the schools.

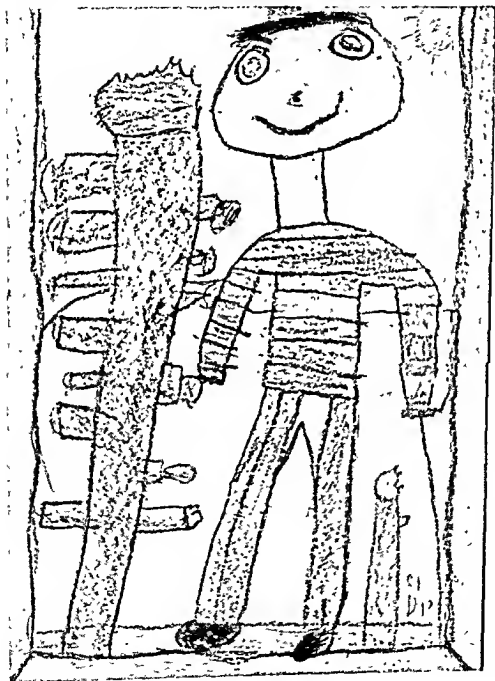
Though the ideas of the little red schoolhouse are generally considered an anachronism in the twentieth century, there are those critics who would have the schools revert to their fundamentalist concerns, in part if not totally. The general concept that supplanted the rigidly limited intellectual syllabus of the nineteenth century and its reliance on drill and rote was formulated before 1900. The ideas of John Dewey and the instrumentalists, of those that desired to liberate and expand teaching in the classrooms have been given a hard, critical examination only since the end of World War II. The assumption that a child-centered and socially oriented curriculum has had universal acceptance since Dewey first appeared merely indicates the lack of information and understanding the critics of progressive education have had. At best, Dewey's contribution was as ideal philosophy and a goal. It was not incorporated basically into the actual practices of a great majority of teachers, though the progressive influence did act as a catalyst for many basic changes in educational philosophy, teacher training, and school policy. This merely points up the gap that so dishearteningly appears in education. In reality, it was not until the critics of progressive education began to voice their judgment and censure that the practices in the classroom began realistically and significantly to reflect Dewey's ideas.

Change in Education: A Foregone Conclusion

Education for the third quarter of the twentieth century will be undergoing a massive state of transition. There are a variety of contending forces urging their biases on the schools. Education, in midcentury and after, seems caught up in a contest in which learning is narrowly acknowledged by some as a tool, in which partisan social and political consideration frequently determine the ways and means of education. Others, just as sincerely conscious of the external situation, insist upon the need to maintain an openness and a freedom of unencumbered learning. Many educators themselves are divided and uncertain about the issues and the most appropriate manner in which to respond to them. Whatever the viewpoint, the forces for change are apparent.

However, the call for a diligent serious attitude in education, though it is a justifiable request on broad philosophical terms by any school of thought, is not really too appropriate in the suggested implementation of its specifics. The scientists themselves do not insist upon a narrow, rigorously exclusive education, but are more generally committed to a broad liberal education. They deplore the unintelligent stress on technical studies without the leavening quality of the humanities. In this they are joined by most educators and lay people who have a regard for the total picture

of the individual relating to his environment through education. Actually, what is at issue, is not so much our ability to produce appropriate numbers of technical people (we have always risen to the occasion of national needs in a practical way), rather, the concern is with the national attitude toward learning as a part of culture. This does invite change of current thinking. One of the central considerations is the most intelligent manner in which to introduce a broadly disseminated knowledge about the arts as a part of the humanities which in turn is a central concern of culture. The multiple roles of art education cast it as a proselyting cultural tastemaker, a personal and symbolic channel for expressive communication, as well as a viable agent for dynamic insights into shifting contemporary viewpoints.



Art is a direct channel for self-awareness "Self-Portrait," First Grade. [Ann Arbor Public Schools; PHOTO: David Churches.]

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY

In the face of this, it becomes a necessity to divest oneself of the timeless dictates of an unchanging educational tradition. This may not be as unfortunate as it appears on the surface, disturbing the metaphoric yet arrested sleep of the contented. We obviously cannot escape the world in which we live, and we should not even attempt it. The challenge, for teachers particularly, is a stimulating one. Not only do they acquire and disseminate facts and attitudes about things and translate them into learning situations, confronting the student with the necessary awareness of his own existence, but they are called upon to practice the Socratic injunction, "know thyself," against the exciting panorama of contemporary life.

The teaching of art on any level is profoundly bound up with this attitude. Change, introspective insight, and uniquely oriented formative qualities, though they may be difficult to structure in practice or to codify in pedagogical theory are, nevertheless, the essential conditions that form the context of the making of art and any method by which it is successfully taught. The impinging factor of society, its promulgations and pressures, only intensifies and colors the act of teaching art; it cannot mechanically shape it without a resulting chaos or emptiness of concept and product. Yet the environment is all around and does not permit itself to be ignored. Somewhere between the opposing, or perhaps complementary factors, a knowing and sensitive teacher can provide what is at best a tentative but sincere insight that honestly assesses and responds to pertinent pressures, but is an effective base for educational action, nevertheless. However, this positive note may be achieved only as the consequence of an individual's own self-realization and sense of educational responsibility. This, in turn, is subject to the flow of conditions, forces, and changing pressures that become the open-ended and changing material of living that each individual has to digest figuratively and transform into new symbolic forms.

A note of caution may point up the distinctions between an artificial obsolescence and an actual quality of change. Despite the hold traditional attitudes have on the average mind, the fast-paced conditions of contemporary society and its own internal forces, economic as well as cultural, build up a superficial quality of change. Fad, fashion, and deliberately built-in material elements of obsolescence lead the popular mind a merry chase after the constantly altered image of what is correct today, of short lived novelty and of artificially primed styles. The fundamental patterns of understanding are not displaced, however, in this constellation of cursory variations; the old appetites and the ingrained habits of attitude are merely reinforced, being titillated by the sycophantic and childish flattery of an ingenious novelty. Art education should plumb below these surface manifestations of change, not wooing obsolescence for its own sake but expressing the vital nature of flux and flow characterizing all forms of living.

The general responsibilities of teaching art cover a rather wide span, becoming, finally, individual responsibilities. They involve the subjective

state of the individual consciousness, the objective conditions of an environment that impinge upon that consciousness, and the symbolic attributes of art, as well as a passion and commitment to its natural values. These factors require a unique insight growing out of an active participation in both the sensory and critical elements of the art processes and the ways by which students as individuals become engaged in creative expression. A personal, independent relationship with the unfolding elements of education, the substance of art, creative learning methods, together with insight into, and sympathetic regard for, cultural forces—all are necessary to meet the responsibilities of teaching. They complement the more structured offerings of teacher training.

It is the latter that teachers have to guard against, for teachers are natural academicians, and institutions reinforce, even if in an involuntary manner, a search for rules, regulations and standardized procedures. The art teachers have to give rein to more visionary and imaginative personal fancies. They have to naturally commit themselves to the playful and searching aspects of art as well as its disciplined qualities, acting the "Pied Piper" to students, as Allan Kaprow refers to the inspirational role of art teachers, radiating the creative verve of art.

The Aims of Art in Education

The relation of art to life is of the first importance, especially in a skeptical age since, in the absence of a belief in God, the mind turns to its own creations and examines them, not alone from the aesthetic point of view, but for what they reveal, for what they validate and invalidate, for the support they give.

WALLACE STEVENS

Why include art in the curriculum? In what way does art function to answer the needs of a student in contemporary culture? The answer probably lies in a more general query as to the significant worth of art in the active outside world as well as for its value for the child in the classroom. If a teacher can develop a personally significant understanding of this question, then he or she is in a position to translate the understanding into effective teaching situations on whatever level is necessary in intrinsic terms of art, rather than of trivial or extraneous qualities.

In responding to the above questions, it would be improper to refer only to the visual arts (the area generally the concern of art education). What is true of painting, sculpture, and design is also true, in most instances, of literature, drama, dance, music and the other arts.

THE FUNCTIONS OF ART

There is an obvious and lengthy list of responses to the question of the function and uses of the arts in modern times. They provide pleasure and diversion, commitment and fulfillment, answering the fundamental compulsion of humans to express ideas and feelings symbolically or to simply while away in amusement and satisfaction what are regarded as leisure hours. The arts afford opportunities for a large range of experiences; vicarious, immediate, projected, removed, intimate, emotional, sensual, spiritual, intellectual, and aesthetic. They permit us to engage in wish fulfillment through fantasy, precise delineation and recording of knowledge through representational images, or communication through a wide variety of

forms, exciting our senses, provoking our emotions, deepening our perceptual understanding, and providing a vital source of meaning. They may be a form of escapism penning us to supersede a distasteful or hostile present or they may act as the outlet for the many psychological promptings in human nature to ensure a more pleasant present. They may be a vehicle for social comment, embodying the virtues and the defects of society, a collective symbol of a society, or they may be an individual avenue of expression, embodying a sensual and symbolic transformation of ideals and visions as well as physical states of being. They tickle and titillate an audience or move it to tears, rage, or ecstasy. They serve as emblems of the past, as precursors of the future, and as the actual and vivid, yet spiritual projection of the present. They, the arts, become the joy of creation for the artist and a vital source of personal meaning for everyone. They can do all of these things and more, because they elicit countless responses and are themselves the symbolic reflection of an innumerable array of human interests and needs. They are, as a general concept, an idealized version of experience which includes the outer world of things and appearances as well as the inner one of impulse, intuition, and emotion in a limitless variety of forms. A painting by Albers or one by Sloan elicits differing responses. The harmonious and sensuous painting by Mullen serves quite another need as does the still different sculpture of Rodin. The intriguing rhythms of a modern building arouse yet other qualities of response and answer changing needs from those of historical architectural forms.

There is an unending list of possibilities that enriches artistic function. Obviously, they are also related in basic individual ways to the needs of the observer as well as to what the particular artist has wanted to express, embody, or communicate. This is one of the central concerns of art in the school curriculum: defining, expanding, enriching, and responding to the sometimes unknown but always felt needs for expression of experience. This seeks a symbolic fulfillment in form or in appreciation of another's vision that is characteristic of human nature, and has been at all times. What is most required at this time is that the need for expression and appreciation and fulfillment be given a dynamic individual as well as mass or imposed cultural direction that is vital and of some significant purpose.

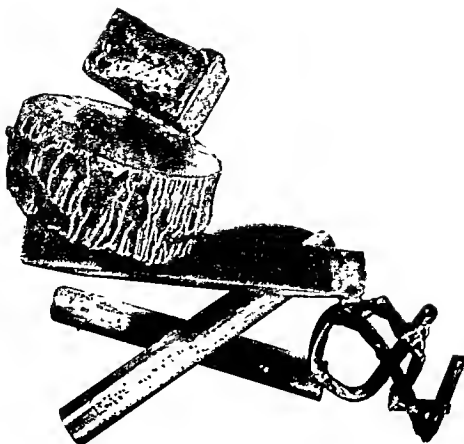
The goals of art education have to encompass all the feeling and thinking attributes of people. The teaching of art has to be a contagiously enthusiastic and qualitative engagement with living experience.

The Problem of Individual Identification and Social Purpose

The development of an appropriate direction in education and teaching method runs parallel to the larger vision in society of what constitutes an adequate and rewarding way of life. The "Age of Anxiety," as the twentieth century has often been dubbed because of its continuing sense of crisis, its violence, and its uncertainties, has not permitted any simple or stable understanding or translation of what the vision of "the good life"

*The visual forms
that are experienced
in works of art are
unique, embodying
an innumerable array
of differing insights,
view points, and
purposes.*

"Welded Steel,"
Joseph Goto [Allan
Franklin Gallery,
New York, photo
Nathan Rabin]



may be. The vacillating beliefs and shifting values have not had a shared point around which to cluster, and it is this focus of attitude, this concentration of a core understanding that is required to render the beliefs and values most effective. Modern man no longer has the commitments of earlier rituals or the devotional attitude of unquestioned world views. The particular sentiments that colored and impelled the earlier processes of meaning and their consequent sense of identification are no longer valid, though the structural process of a relationship between man and his world remains a necessity. Yet the sense of identification, of meaningful purpose has withered away in the upheavals of the past century; modern man stands shorn of his old supports, but more important, he is, as well, bereft of an ability to erect new ones, deprived of authoritative guides by which to steer his way.

This basic condition is also reflected as well in the psychological bewilderment that besets many students in a seemingly anchorless society. It is sensed in the lack of inner realization that confounds the modern temperament and is further reflected in an uncertain educational atmosphere. It is also seen in the glib and facile identification that is made with superficial values or with those that a mature mind would regard with skepticism—the stress on material goods, on surface appearances, on conformity and on “success” usually with small attention paid to how it is achieved.

Change is not a vital agent in this viewpoint but only an opportunistic point of departure from an unexamined fear and apathy.

Education, despite its efficacy in spreading knowledge and developing values, suffers almost as much from this shallowness as does the larger sphere of living. To offset this there is need of a vital personal vision coupled with a sincere but sophisticated orientation toward the positive goals of society. There has to be a belief in the efficacy and the guidance of an education that permits mature yet individual loyalties. A moral authority may result that is attractive because it stems from the natural propensities and aspirations of men. These latter need not be the chaotic or negative qualities that are sometimes ascribed to them, despite the



"The Young Mother," Auguste Rodin. [Collection The University of Michigan Museum of Art]

modern sense of despair and material aggrandizement. Cultivated through an experience of values that are of vital spiritual and aesthetic concerns, as well as practical and self-aggrandizing ones, the guiding principles may be socially beneficial and individually rewarding. They are certainly necessary to "the good life."

This rather profound aim of qualitative purpose would be difficult to attain at any time, given the errant penchants and impulsive desires that men do possess. In a time of radical transition and disaffection with prevailing values, it becomes even more a poet's idealization rather than a condition in living that may be eventually fulfilled. However, even if qualitative purpose exists primarily as an ideal, it serves a most vital function in that it infuses the aspirations of the human community with a laudable and a genuinely desired goal. This creates the need to shape life as a form that can be lived in accordance with pertinent and meaningful principles in its fullest aesthetic sense as well as the intellectual and the material; education could not want any more appropriate definition of its function and aim. Though there may be an element of sermonizing in this attitude and a too easily accepted virtue of outlook, there is at the same time, the need of education honestly and realistically, rather than abstractly or with mere lip service and sloganizing, to involve itself with a vision of an adequate and influential contemporary ideal.

No matter what the ideal, in order for both the individual and his society to sense its quality and its impetus toward action, a response from both individual and group has to develop. Sheer response, however, is rather mindless; it has to be enriched with an awareness of the conditions of life and it has to reflect, or better yet—express, a real meaning and authentic purpose. It is on this rather fundamental level that the arts offer education a means of activity and engagement which can bring about a quality and a meaning that is necessary to a full realization of experience.

This is not meant to suggest that the arts themselves constitute the prime meaning of existence that is desired, nor that they are the only source in its development. It would be almost absurd to suggest that the fulfillment of the aesthetic urge is the single important purpose, no matter how central it is to human nature. There are other moral, physical and intellectual qualities that are easily as important in man's make-up. Nor is art the only source of meaning. Abstract thought, religion, and physical satisfaction among others just as readily provide sources of meaning and guide the purposes of individuals and groups. Each of these provides the basic factors of understanding that go beyond simple perception, permitting an individual a quality of realization of ideas, emotions, or objects that then guides response into some channel of action, hopefully of a genuinely felt nature.

Qualitative Realization of Experience

Realization of one's experience in a qualitative way implies that a vital confrontation has occurred between the individual—his perceptions and



"White Front,"
Joseph Albers.
[Collection The
University of
Michigan Museum
of Art]



*Abstract as well as
representational
images offer
aesthetic means
of realizing human
experience*

*"Dust Storm, Fifth
Avenue," John Sloan*
[The Metropolitan
Museum of Art,
George A. Heam
Fund, 1921]

The goals of art education may be summarized in one sentence. Art education seeks to develop sensitive, *imaginative*, creative, and artistically literate individuals who may grow aesthetically, emotionally, and intellectually through active expression or reflective appreciation in the arts. In the process a qualitative personal vision is formed. On the other hand, the goals may be exhaustively treated in general classifications and in specific categories, delineating all of the pertinent factors. The latter course would be a tedious one to do in a single outline and no doubt would fall short of including each of the goals that may touch upon artistic activity both in school and in the outside world. Actually, the aims of teaching art are implied in most of what follows throughout the entire text.

The Individualizing of Personality

Art education puts a premium on what is singularly particular to each person. It stresses the unique and the personal, *permitting* each student to listen to himself and to discover his own sources, inclinations, possibilities, and limitations. The processes of art may be therapeutic, offering a catharsis of personal problems, allowing for a "staged" enactment of hostilities, inhibitions, and other behavioral disorders that then acts as a psychic cleansing agent. However, even more basic, the teaching of art aims for the development of a healthy individual, accepting the differences that naturally distinguish people, utilizing these subjective distinctions as personal channels of self realization. It becomes a means of real and meaning-



A typically spontaneous expression, transforming childhood sentence into visual symbols "A Bright Day," First Grade, [New York Public Schools, PHOTO S. Martin Friedman]

ful identification with experience, and despite the initial chaos, structuring the experience for personal ends.

Art helps develop a gratifying sense of personal identity and a feeling of natural integrity. These needs are perhaps most basic in our age. The imposition and acceptance of mass, undifferentiated values in the general public has led to what many observers have referred to as a loss of personal identity. The standardized code of the group has supplanted the "inner gyroscope" that more clearly offered preceding times a choice of identification. Work and other basic undertakings in contemporary culture often does not provide satisfaction for the individual. It categorizes him in groups, his cues for belief and action generated by outside factors and conditions—the mores of his culture and the satisfactions that stem from "keeping up with the Joneses" rather than listening to the inner propensities of one's own self. Yet the need for individual identity remains in an integrity of achievement. Since so many of the normal conditions of living seem to conspire against this, the individual has to find some form of expression which permits an unhampered search for self. The arts, in a wide range of possibilities not only provide this opportunity, they become concrete symbols of personal identity the individual himself has created. The integrity of his purpose is circumscribed only by his own sense of honesty which need not be compromised by any social or group demands.

Art in education can develop a sense of personal and unique worthwhile-ness. Paul Coodman has referred to the prevalent lack of self-respect evident in the students today in his book, *Growing Up Absurd*. With so many of the fundamental values that inspire man to positive action and belief removed from sight or fractured into mechanized and oftentimes insensitive components, it is difficult for young people to feel what they are doing as being worthwhile. A job is no longer basically regarded as an honest means of contribution of labor in order to gain the wherewithal to sustain life, but is thought of as a status symbol or as a disagreeable task that offers no intrinsic reward. The arts in themselves cannot offset this social malaise; it is much too deeply rooted in a pervasive relationship of the individual in society to the characteristic means of production. It is economic and political in nature and art cannot hope to counter these influences in any obvious way. Yet the arts offer in themselves a quality of intrinsic personal value that permits an individual sense of achievement and expression. They become a means of counteracting cultural deterioration by insisting on the worth of the individual, by respecting his personality idiosyncracies, and by appealing to his unique being through the directness of the senses and the satisfactions of the imagination.

The Heightening of Sensibility

Art education aims particularly to expand the individual's response to the aesthetic and emotional qualities of experience. The teaching of art is intimately and fundamentally involved with the senses. It hopes to educate them so that the imaginative and perceptual responses will be of some consequence. Tasting, hearing, touching, smelling, seeing, and the wide

Art offers a creative means of personal expression and realization of experience, particularly through active participation with the materials of art.
[New York Public Schools]



range of sense response to heat, cold, pressure, movement and such, all are bound up with qualitative experience and require development through educational processes. An innate and beneficially symbolic form of "play" is involved in art that also permits experience to be formed into imaginatively satisfying and perceptually exciting ways. The heightened interrelationship between the sense receptors, perceptual understanding, and imaginative transformation lead to an enriched sensibility of feeling. This leads further to the "expansion of ones personal horizon"—an enlargement of the sense of self in both space and time. This is one of the most characteristic offerings of the arts, its innate ability to transcend the limits of ordinary happenings, permitting the individual an extension of his experience into a realm of vivid and dramatic realization that always possesses a larger potential. The student who charges his own senses with the visual excitement of painting and sculpture, the pure tonalities of music, the expressive movement of the dance, or with the mind's eye imagery of poetry is going far beyond the normal bounds of experience. He is in a very practical as well as a symbolic sense enlarging the territory of his knowledge and his capacity for more experience.

The Intensification of Learning and Meaning

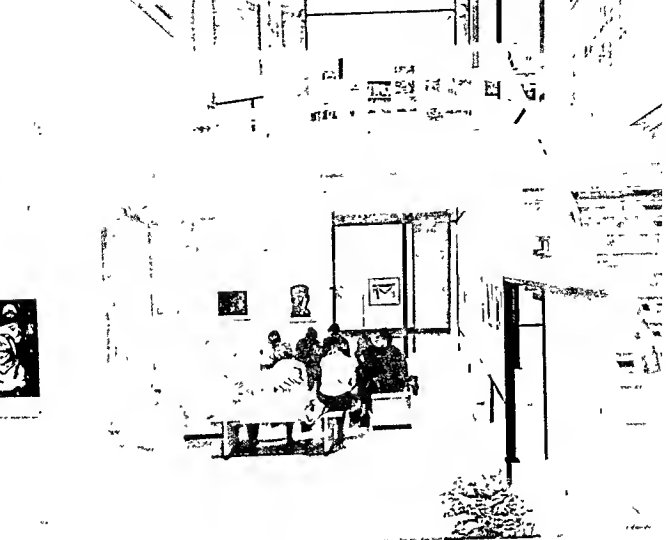
Art education provides channels of communication through image formation and symbolic meaning that are definite necessities in the general learning process. It deals with concrete qualities and creative procedures that involve instances of transformation and substantial interpretation of raw experience. Art may provide forms of creative insight and orient thinking in characteristic and significant ways that result in productive learning as well as emotional or aesthetic satisfaction. It not only stimulates spontaneous and intuitive insights, it insists as well upon elements of analysis

and evaluation making for real decisions that affect and direct both intellectual and aesthetic understanding. It aims to integrate the various elements of the cognitive process, the rational ordering of parts with the imaginative, intuitive, and nonrational traits of human understanding. A high order of learning is involved in art, the central and various attendant processes affording the student fertile opportunities for discovery and comprehensive insight into the various orders of existence so that personal meaning may be established.

This leads to a sense of personal development. The more immediate sense of active involvement in one's continuing sense of development is sometimes difficult to know. The arts in their sensual and unique qualities of expression and form, offer this immediacy of participation that may be vital to a worthwhile development of purpose for the individual. However, growth as an end in itself is a rather uncritically accepted abstraction, especially among the progressive educators. Growth alone is an inadequate goal; it must be leavened with an affirmation and a realization of experience that has some moral authority internally sensed as well as measured against objective standards of excellence. The existential plight of all individuals, the contingency of events and action, if genuinely made aware to the individual particularly through the arts, provides for a more intense development of insight and commitment to qualities that may be regarded as positive. There is a sense of discrimination as to what constitutes learning, what is of intrinsic worth. The artist is often a model of commitment, pursuing an ideal or a goal with a fervor that sets him apart and frequently makes him the envy of other men. It is only in an "engagement" with the creative forces of one's own psyche that the errant and often absurd conditions of existence are, at least for the moment, overwhelmed.

The Enrichment of Culture

Art education is an important access for the student through which he becomes acquainted with past or foreign cultures as well as his own present pattern of living and social attitudes. Participation in the arts and their appreciation aims not only to accommodate the student to the prevalent features of his surroundings, but to assess them in both objectively critical and subjectively feeling ways. It provides a basis of evaluation that may lead to admiration for past accomplishments, rapport with present ones or an attempt to modify and otherwise change, by addition to or rejection of cultural viewpoints, when it is deemed necessary to do so. The goal of art education in this respect is to establish a rapport between student and culture so that a vital dialogue can ensue between the two, intensifying a sense of community. At first it may appear that the arts cannot offer a sense of community, for the independent, personal idiom has been largely stressed. Nevertheless, in a very real way the arts permit the individual to sense the drama of creation as shared by others. They are the most concrete symbols and communicative devices that man possesses whereby the deepest feelings and emotions, the most personal and subjective experiences of other human beings are made concrete and available. There is in



this attribute of art a form of that profound I and Thou experience that Martin Buber writes of—a sharing of oneself with the sentence and being of other people. Art may provide the basis of a joining of moral and aesthetic community interests, for a common good.

THE VITAL RESPONSE TO EXPERIENCE

The response to these goals of art education is a value-laden one that a “realized” quality of education will determine through the immediacy of classroom experience. The student in the classroom will be stimulated by the atmosphere, or he may feel a contrary reaction. Other values that have been internalized may intrude to color his attitude, depending upon the effects of past experiences and present inclinations. Or he may weigh the stimulation in the classroom against the beckoning day outside and find learning at the moment undesirable, no matter how intensely motivated. However, if the realization is strong enough, the response is likely to be in accord with its intensity. Similarly, a teacher could feel zestful and enthusiastic, thinking up ways of sustaining a creative atmosphere or she may feel tired and depleted, having given too much of herself, anxious to modify the mood. Each individual colors his responses in unique ways,

A study group at the University of Michigan Museum of Art. Art also offers personal satisfactions through the recreative experiences of appreciation.
[University of Michigan Museum of Art]

and each response need not be exact, predictable, or similar, though each may be reacting abstractly to the same experiential stimulus. What is of importance though is that individuals respond to the realized element in ways that are meaningful to themselves leading to some kind of action response that is either contemplative or actual but imbued with feeling and vision.

Experience is obviously the core of existence, its realization subject to the degree of intensity with which we grasp its significance. Subsequent actions and attitudes are the individual ways we respond to the realization of experience. The characteristic response of a person determines whether the vision of existence that is heeded "passes muster." In this manner, democracy, public education, commitment to cultivation of taste, or any other pattern of living is tested.

In what way do the arts contribute to the enrichment of experience? As the philosopher Irwin Edman indicated, "they intensify, clarify and interpret experience,"² permitting a realization of greater than average depth. This is achieved in the particularly characteristic manner of the arts, by imaginatively expressing in symbolic form the experience otherwise felt or thought of in a prosaic and routine manner or it remains as a locked agitation in the confines of the dim unconscious. The imaginative symbolic forms evoke a quality of individual experience that is vital, immediately stimulating, "intensifying, clarifying, and interpreting," that experience in a way no other approach is capable of achieving. The arts open up the spiritual and aesthetic values, permitting a degree of realization of self and environment that could inform, support, and shape the vision each person creates. The arts become among the most fertile sources for orientation with a creative resonance of quality, providing natural opportunities to define and achieve intrinsically satisfying purpose. It is the central distinguishing attribute of imagination that functions to establish art in this role.

The Significance of Imagination

Brewster Chiselin has broadly defined imagination "as the realization of life in form."³ He continues . . .

only the first and third items of this statement, realization and form, can be defined satisfactorily. By the central term life I mean the mysterious substance of our being, but that statement is not offered as a definition. I would understand realization to mean both an actualization, as opposed to ideal or fancied subsistence, and a coming into possession. And, therefore, by the whole phrase "realization of life," I would imply the actual, concrete flourishing of our being. By form I mean aesthetic and intellectual structure, not such structure as is thought of abstractly, but rather as it lives through serving in an act of apprehension, in that use which is its only mode of life and which identifies it with the energies of our being. Form is intrinsically the play of energies of our inner life composing themselves in the configurations of some medium, paint or stone, musical tones, words, mathematical symbols, or the life, whether the material

[OPPOSITE] The creative process particularly in art is usually marked by an intensity of endeavor and commitment to personal expression, stressing an imaginative focus of activity.
(PHOTO © Roy Stevens)

² Irwin Edman, *Arts and the Man*, (New York: Mentor Books, 1949), p. 30.

³ Brewster Chiselin, *Education and the Imagination*, (Irving Kaufman, ed.) (Published jointly by The University of Michigan and The Museum of Modern Art, N.Y., 1958), p. 19.

of the medium is present to the senses as when clay curves before the eyes and feels firm to the hands, or whether the configuration is envisaged only subjectively, as when the terms of a mathematical theorem are assembled in thought without being written down.⁴

Ghiselin reiterates the most important function in life as "realization" of its experiences. He expands the idea that this can only happen in a relatively complete or fulfilling way through the structuring of form and that this requires the uses of imagination. The aesthetic uses of imagination find their forms through the various media of art. Experience is transformed through the agency of art into meaning, corresponding in its forms to the innumerable but inherently underlying patterns of human nature. In this manner there is a meaningful realization of individual experience that also fits into the purposes of human vision and existence. It is the function of art education to implement this understanding in the school by stimulating and deepening individual imagination.

It may be helpful if we very briefly examine some actual examples of art in this respect. In Roualt's "Christ on the Cross with Disciples," the painting has a rough but clear representation of human figures. The content is obviously religious in nature, the image of Christ and the cross being universally recognized. Is it that the artist wants simply to record an important event in human history, to represent one of the most significant episodes in the Christian theology? No one can deny these as being present, but it is just as obvious that the artist has gone beyond the mere visual representation of an important event. He has expressed very directly his perceptual and intellectual comprehension of the event, but more profoundly, he has symbolically created a form that is full of emotion and feeling. He has brought into play his intuitions and inner attitudes, *realizing* in an art medium a blend both of his subjective and objective attitudes. He has evoked an imaginative experience (for he was not present at the crucifixion) intensifying his understanding, expressing it in a sensuous symbol of color, shape and light value—all visually plastic elements. The audience feels an empathy with the agony of Christ, the devotion and grief of the disciples and may comprehend the religious compulsions that inspired the painting even if the belief is not shared.

Roualt has gone beyond simple recording and has imaginatively expressed the intense quality of his insight and vision, which the onlooker may share. He has also created a bold and sensuous visual composition, structuring the elements of art: color, mass, light values, texture, and line which excite the eye and reward the aesthetic sense. This may be appreciated abstractly in terms of itself: the intensity of its color, the vigor of its line, the dynamics of its patterns, the measure of its rhythms and proportions. The content may also be seen separately, pointing up a moral, attempting to edify and improve character and belief because of the lofty theme. However, the morality is then merely a repeated one like a rote catechism and the art form a particularly apt tool that is dependent upon other than its intrinsic properties to provide it with real meaning.

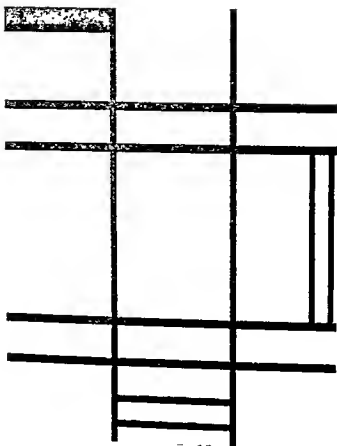
⁴ Brewster Ghiselin, *ibid.*, p. 19



"Christ on the
Cross," Georges
Roualt [Collection
The University of
Michigan Museum
of Art]

Actually, Roualt has sensitively and passionately interwoven the two aspects of form and content, organically united them into a new configuration that is more than the simple blend of parts. A new vision has resulted that creates an intensity of realization that goes beyond the average connotations of morality and beauty. It is an *imaginative* symbol that possesses its own moral authority, providing a *direct* means of recognition of spirit for both the artist and his audience. As such it is a fundamental "realization of life in form."

Similarly, in Mondrian's "Composition with Yellow and Red," the art symbol is an imaginative construction of human experience. However, the more characteristic twentieth-century style of abstraction is employed. Mondrian has written that it took him a long time to "discover that the peculiarities of form and natural color evoke subjective states of feeling,



*"Composition with
Yellow and Red,"
Piet Mondrian [Leo
Castelli Gallery, New
York, photo
Rudolph Burckhardt]*

which obscure pure reality. The appearance of natural forms changes but reality remains constant. To create pure reality plastically, it is necessary to reduce natural forms to the constant elements of form and natural color to primary color. The aim is not to create other particular forms and colors with all their limitations, but to work toward abolishing them in the interests of a larger unity."⁶ This larger unity included the spiritual and harmonious relationships, as well as the basic elements of plastic and visual form. Through the perfected and infinitely varied patterns of art, the visual forms should demonstrate to man a symbolic means of achieving harmonious living and spiritual grace in his life. This is as obviously an intense realization of experience and certainly an imaginative one as is a more representational or "realistic" method, though it may require a cultivation of understanding and sensibility to share the artist's attitudes or to simulate personal ones on a parallel plane of serious purpose.

The delightful drawing of a first grader (page 33) shares in the more mature artist's quality of realization of experience, though the level of conscious creativity may be quite different. The spontaneously painted image of the self in rather droll relationship to the flowered surroundings is also symbolically expressive of a larger and personally felt sense of existence that somehow extends on into an infinite universe. Yet the

⁶ Piet Mondrian, "Plastic Art and Pure Plastic Art," *Documents of Modern Art*, (New York: Wittenborn and Company, 1945), Vol. 2, p. 10.

child has made her encounter with the mysterious but wonderful experience of sentience, into a concrete form. She has transformed the searching yet ineffable qualities of her young life into a visual symbol. She has perceived her own state of being, realized it with an intensity that led to an artistic response. In the process she has learned something; she has had a vivid moment; she has perhaps allayed a fear and affirmed a feeling; she has structured an idea and embodied an emotion. All of this could not have occurred without a freely functioning imagination.

ART, AN IMAGINATIVE SYMBOL OF EXPERIENCE

The various art forms then imaginatively structure life's experiences so that they may be more fully realized. It is always a personal kind of experience because it is involved with the subjective conditions of living: emotions and values, as well as the objective ones: sense data, physical manipulation, and reason. It brings the two levels of experience together and shapes them into a new whole. This is in keeping with the individual artist's vision and results in a unique symbolic configuration. Yet, the artist's realization of his experience, while it develops and enhances his own sentience also provides a bridge between himself and other people. Art is a channel through which experience is shared in an essential and felt manner. It infuses the individual with a vitality that is different, more sensitive and forceful than ordinary existence, enriching the consciousness beyond its otherwise limited capacities. At the same time it invites a participation in the visions of great men and in the myriad attitudes of countless others. The implications for education are obvious.

However, art is no perfect quality or the complete panacea for the evil, ignorance, insensitivity, triviality, and apathy in society. Like the other modes of man's expression, it has its congenital limitations; its participants do not possess an infallible judgment simply because they are engaged in making or appreciating "beauty" or expressive form. Because of the unique and personal aspect so central to art, the intrinsically "moral" authority of its forms may escape general recognition or acceptance, given the wide diversity of individual temperament and background. Despite the symbolic unity of form and content that the best of art possesses, man tends to analyze and fragment his experience. The relations among the artistic elements, the intellectual awareness, the emotional subject, the aesthetic values, even where they are implied or abstract, are always in a kind of tentative balance that may either ignore or contradict one or another of the parts or vacillate between them. The precision and clarity of execution, the purity of line, color and value in Mondrian's painting may be considered as valid aesthetic experiences. At the same time, the vision of harmonious living may be regarded as a fanciful and foolish dream of a very impractical artist, his concept of the balance and purity of forms as a reflection of "the good life" no more than a static and esoteric belief with no real significance for the mass of men. Similarly, the subject-form plastic tensions in the Roualt may be regarded as arbitrary visual rhythms

caused by crude unrefined daubs. Many persons may feel a positive and sublime identification with the disembodied symbol of Christian faith, but find the forms of the painting crude and inappropriate. The girl's painting may be seen as a mere doodle, the nonsensical untutored fancies of the very young that signify nothing. There is no guarantee that art may not imagine a so-called false object or event as well as a true one, call up visions of erroneous understanding or nonexistent chimeras rather than those that may be of material substance and logically affirmed.

What art does provide though, is the variety of media through which experience may be symbolically yet vividly perceived and intensely realized. It is this attribute that commends it as a necessary means in education. The values that are inherent in its fluid structure will be felt by the students as they participate in the experience. These are fundamental, geared to a responsive chord in human nature. Yet they are not complete, they do not preempt the source from which individuals draw their understanding of right and wrong, good and bad, and other moral, ethical, intellectual, and emotional imperatives. This encompasses all of living, not only a part of it.

THE ROLE OF ART IN EDUCATION

Art as a part of the school curriculum may be regarded as the imaginative device by which students may learn and grow through aesthetic expression. It offers a particularly apt and natural channel in addition to the intellectual one that brings about an awareness of intuitive knowledge as well as a reasoned logical kind. It supports the individual propensities of students at the same time that it opens up the range of other possible responses to experience. It is an open invitation to transform emotion into communicable form.

A student who paints a picture, sings a song, dances a step, or fashions a verse is involved with a direct means of experience. They are not only learning in the very real sense of that word, but they are stimulating their powers of imagination so that all of their experiences, unconscious as well as those that have perceptual clearance, will be intensified and presented in a more vigorous light. They are further, permitting an avenue of expression, that is not only rewarding in its own sense of creative formation, but is basic to the full maturation of the individual as a knowing and alertly responsive person.

This does not insist that each student prepare himself to be an artist. That aim is a rather special affair. Though at the moment of his art experience there is no reason why the school child cannot think and act as an artist in the play of his imagination and his need to express it in some sensuous form. Art is not only the solemn or dedicated involvement of the totally committed individual; it is, as well, broadly engendered and developed in the imaginative potential of experience and transformation that everyone possesses, from the sensuous data of seeing, hearing, and touching and from the emotional sources that feel, are empathetic, and compelling in the wide variety of human ways. All experience is fit for art,

its only requirement being its genuineness and its need of realization. Art education should have as its most important aim the opening up of this quality in all students, stimulating and provoking the imagination in a creative way, making the conditions of art, its forms and methods viable, permissible, and expressive for the student.

Appreciation and Participation

This stress in art education therefore has to be twofold—one, that art is an external realization of experience that someone else has created and, two, despite this, that art is also an internal quality, resident in some imaginative degree in all individuals and capable of expression. The first leads to an awareness of the life about, of imaginings perhaps congruent to one's own but still equally separate experiences of appreciation of the world's wonders, delights, and despairs as others have symbolized and formed them through art. It provides a sensitive and empathetic base to sharing experiences, to escaping, if even only as an illusion, from the confines of the self and entering the precincts of other personalities. The appreciative experience may be vicarious at points but it is also a fundamental one. The second affords a direct involvement that shapes a very individual and creative realization of personal experience, offering not only the satisfactions and growth inherent in individual expression, but activating an engagement with the very sources that give meaning to existence.

As an educational device then, art functions as a means of expression which other areas cannot readily fulfill. It is almost impossible for anyone to directly communicate his subjective and singularly colored view of the world. Words tend to generalize the uniqueness of the experience so that what is being discursively expressed is more the universal condition that man shares in the world rather than the particular reception of personal experience in that world. The commonplace characteristics dominate, falsifying or adulterating an honest or more adequate and vivid realization of an individual occurrence or thought. The experience is more likely to communicate on a sympathetic or felt level if it is transformed into a sensuous medium when it becomes a picture or a song. It is when this is openly expressed that a vital and an authentic experience may be said to have occurred beyond the ordered exposition of intellectual logic.

Social Relationships

Beyond this, the arts are the reflections of a social order in a very discerning manner. They are the outward manifestations of all of the inner happenings of culture. As such they are the symbolic touchstones of the values of that culture. Though even the artist himself does not always understand the significance of his forms, the art itself, if it is a felt realization of experience, will embody important meanings of any particular period as well as casting light on past times and indicate the shape of things to come. It is a sensitive instrument attuned to the innermost qualities of man.

The values of the contemporary world find their ways into the diverse styles and forms of today's art. However, they are most clearly seen in the

apparent divisions between the serious or fine art forms and those of the popular variety. The latter appear to satisfy the average tastes, despite the fact that their mass production and standardization render the critical faculties and the basic "hunger for beauty" futile. The indolent responses so ubiquitously reflected in the comics, in mail order catalogs, in most of the Hollywood movies or television programs, in the greater mass of advertising and public illustration, not only manifest the lack of artistic merit of the forms but they support the notion that average, commonplace needs will accept an environment devoid of any real commitment to values beyond the practical and the distracting. Yet, it cannot be said that there is any real lack of opportunity to experience the fine arts; there are more numerous avenues of access than ever before. There simply is no great yearning or groundswell of genuine sentiment in that direction. This bespeaks, not only a personal deficiency on the part of the countless individuals who exist in a state, relative to the arts, as one of torpor and apathy, but a lack in the educational patterns of the schools, which seeks practical or intellectual excellence yet accepts aesthetic sloth. If education does have responsibilities, they are toward the full development of students and an influence on the social milieu. Just as the individual student has to act himself out, attempting to achieve an authentic self, so a culture strives to epitomize its worth in its art as well as in the other areas of human endeavor. In both situations, the single and the group, there is an encumbent responsibility in education to present the most vital realization of the experience of existence in more than a vouchsafed manner.

*Students tend to
express cultural
values in their art
work "Folk Dance,"
Sixth Grade
Drawing (New York
Public Schools,
PHOTO S Martin
Friedman)*



This necessitates the conditions of fine art which cannot lend themselves to abridgment or adulteration, but have to be fully affirmed in a passionate way. This is summed up very adequately by August Heckscher:

... But the real reason for the fostering of art is, I suggest, that art is important in the life of the people, and that without it the political community falls short of its ideal potentialities.

"It is through the forms of art, I have been arguing, that the inherent tendencies of a civilization are made visible and potent. And it is through the enjoyment of art . . . that the public happiness is ultimately attained. The beginning of the long separation of art and politics saw the withdrawal of painting and sculpture from public places, from the churches and squares and buildings of the city, to become the adornment of the homes of private citizens. The typical museum was at its start a closed collection, and only gradually became a place for people to visit. The tradition of private ownership of art has persisted, no doubt greatly enriching individual lives. It has led, in the age of mass democracy, to the tendency for art to be adulterated, commercialized, consumed. What we need to restore is not so much the love of art—that has never vanished—but the tradition of art as a source of common enjoyment, a focus for the pleasures and delights of the citizenry.*

These beliefs may then blossom into the personal visions that art generates, creating one area of moral authority in means and ends that clearly finds its source in a natural and particularly characteristic human activity.

THE CONDITIONS OF ART

The aims of art in education can only be realized if there is an understanding of the conditions of art. Admittedly, these conditions do not lend themselves to simple categories or precise definition. Nevertheless, there are a sufficient number of general characteristics that provide a necessary theoretical and educational direction.

Art possesses a dynamic quality, a moving, living force that permits it to mesh with the vital energies of human activity. Similarly, art education when it is of positive value in the schools reflects a dynamic interaction between the student and his experiences resulting in the creative process and a shaping of forms. These forms and processes synthesize the many strands of human activity, the emotional and the reasoned, the abstract nature of ordered design and the concrete presence of sensory response, the need for expression and the search for understanding, bringing together the frequently disparate elements into a realizable unit.

This realized unit of expressed experience possesses the additional benefit of being concrete. It has tangible properties, though it may have transformed intangible feelings. As such, it is somewhat unique as an educational device because it provides an immediate and relatively complete means of giving shape to a learning experience in other than the more normal pedagogical abstraction that is also usually a fragment of a larger understanding.

This shaping process is a natural one for students of all ages, but most

* August Heckscher, *The Public Happiness* (New York: Atheneum, 1962), p. 282.

particularly of the elementary years. The elan and spontaneity with which young children approach their art work is an indication of the direct means that art and its creative possibilities offer as an educational channel in the schools. This creative joy and expressive fulfillment answer some basic human needs; its natural charm and emotional attraction are another of its characteristic elements.

Parallel to the natural creative quality that art provides for students is the aesthetic factor which is another basic condition of art. The ease with which a young child will accept the pleasure of drawing, the thrill of a brush stroke, the marvel of colors combining, the feeling of mass in a clay project, or of texture in a construction, reflects the completeness of the artistic experience, the fact that its doing or appreciation is an end in itself. The experience of making or appreciating art is thus self-sufficient and largely given over to the aesthetic. It provides an area of student realization that does not have to be useful or instrumental towards other ends. The aesthetic experience is both a condition of art education and one of its goals leading to personal satisfaction that does not depend upon complex, extraordinary, or devious combinations of endeavor and understanding. Yet because it is complete in itself, it is of invaluable assistance in the general learning atmosphere, helping the student to integrate what might otherwise remain as diverse fragments of knowledge and understanding.

Invention, improvisation, imaginative imagery, and discovery are also attendant conditions of art in education, because they are fundamental to the process of making artistic forms. These have become desired characteristics in the education process, so that they may well be of broad consequence when they are motivated during the art lesson. A sure hallmark of successful art teaching lies in the presence of these qualities and they are indispensable to individual development.

Some other conditions that merit mention (and which will be referred to at greater length elsewhere) are the intensity and fullness of observation, the rich associations, the originality of insight, the enhanced perceptions and the developed sense of discrimination of parts and qualities. These are all a part of the experience of art education.

In summary, in order to determine and achieve any of the goals of art education, it is essential that the conditions that make for art or art appreciation be appropriately understood. Though no predetermined listing is possible, certain large groupings of attributes stand out, such as the aesthetic, the interrelatedness of various human faculties, the direct spontaneity of approach, the inventiveness leading to discovery, and the sense of creative joy even when the experience is frustrating or difficult.

Art can be considered as one of the guides towards a more meaningful response to experience and a more intense realization of that experience, providing a unique yet genuine insight into living. As an educational channel it fits naturally into the curriculum. It offers a means of learning and growing experience that other areas cannot provide easily. It aims at no less than the full exploitation of each student's potential.

Finally, art education aims to unify through its activities the many faceted attributes, potentialities, and understandings of any, one, and of all students. It brings together the emotions and the intellect, intuition and logic, fusing imaginative play with concrete technique, personal identification with cultural mores, expressing the general values of a society or a time or a place, while it stresses the uniqueness and separateness of the aesthetic element. As a synthesized aim, it may be said that the teaching of art creates opportunities for a fuller quality of living, at once more speculative and intrinsically rewarding, more personally inventive and adventure-some, and individually pertinent in that it invokes the unique wellsprings of creatively expressive and aesthetic play that each person possesses.

These goals are implicit in any successful teaching of art. They may be properly implemented if the teaching designed to elicit them is artistic itself. The art classroom has to be a workshop—a workshop of forms and fancies, of visions and techniques, of symbols and expression and of play and problem resolution. It should embody all of the romantic but serious atmosphere of an artist's studio coupled with the alertness and vivacity of an inspired classroom. Then, the most natural aims of achieving self-realization have an opportunity to succeed, as well as the parallel aims of mastery of environment and positive sense of community.

Contending Ideas in the Teaching of Art

Humane learning, it seems to me, has as its principal aim the education of what we quaintly call the human predicament, that is, the eternal conflict between the aspirations and frustrations of man. Its subjects, or rather its companions in this enterprise, are philosophy and art in the widest sense of these two great words. The object of learning is coterminous with the object of philosophy, and the object of art is to seek that stay against confusion, which is joy.

HOWARD MUMFORD JONES

Nor only is there the bewildering multiplicity of contemporary visual impressions mentioned in another chapter, there is a parallel profusion of concepts and influences that dog the heels of education. The variegated contrasts of contending ideas may stimulate the enthusiastic mind but it can also burden the teacher who is seeking a salutary philosophy; it usually bewilders the student who is attempting to discover the most appropriate methods to take into an art teaching career, or in implementing the aims of art education.

THE PITFALLS OF EDUCATIONAL FASHION

Art education has a particularly wide variety of viewpoints which in one sense may be an indication of its vitality. However, on another level, it is rife with attitudes and prescriptions that frequently conflict with one another. Even when there is no opposition between differing ideas, unless the relationships are clearly pointed up, there is a dubious complementing of various concepts. This is somewhat compounded in that art reflects durable concerns with continuing art values which have extended through all the expressive centuries of man's consciousness of his aesthetic self. This contrasts sharply with the great velocity of intellectual and social change predicated characteristically on values of commercial, scientific, and technological progress. The teaching of art has to bridge this gap, while the individual teacher is faced with developing a personal synthesis out of the divergent and multiple viewpoints.

The last few generations have been schooled to think of methodological fashion, disguised often as valid change, as inherently progressive. Fashion becomes a key attitude not only in the latest dress style, automobile grill, or book of the month, but in ideas, in educational and even institutional

values. Though an open and flexible mind is essential to teaching, there are dangers in the constant treadmill of innovation or even periodic improvisations that are forever supposed to be progressive, but are in reality an unexamined commitment to novelty.

Though change, as stated earlier, is a necessary and indeed an organic factor in all existence and an open attitude toward it is essential to creative and maturing processes, both social and individual, its being equated with the arbitrary fashion of the day makes for superficially determined viewpoints, shallow behavior, and thin education. Too often the fashionable change is slavishly accepted and it then degenerates into fad more readily than we are prone to admit. The deeper and more abiding sense of individual purpose and social goals are then lost sight of and eventually mangled. Many of the public and private symbols vacillate in their meaning, developing a cloud of obfuscation for the teacher who would interpret them for his students. The symbols of fashion rarely offer stable teaching connotations or understanding of more than superficial merit. The subsequent confusion does not permit any more than the rudiments of important human values to emerge from the classroom. The process of personal growth—the existential idea of becoming—remains a tentative or circumscribed one. The collectively held attitudes sporadically break through one's consciousness as momentary instances of great immediacy, but are little more than a succession of narrowly topical concerns.

In art education, for example, we see this sporadically coming to the surface with such teaching enthusiasms as finger painting more than a generation ago or chip-knife carving farther back in time or the sudden interest in the twenties in Greek and Egyptian design motifs that children had to copy laboriously. More recently, such interests as copper enameling or mosaic tablemaking have found their way in the upper levels while the idea of junk art and infinite experimentation with literally hundreds of materials permeates the whole range of school. It is not only materials and processes but philosophical attitudes that are arbitrarily altered as well.

Yet paradoxically, the diversity, the rapid tempo, and the stress on a changing fashion is peculiarly counterbalanced by the national tendency to excessive conformity. This rather odd note, may be an attempt to fix certain values so that they do not disappear into the limbo of yesterday's newspaper, demonstrating the difficulty of accepting true change. Or perhaps the profound changes that stem from the dynamics of our society are felt, at a great distance from the center, by the average individual through the easily acceptable artifice of fashion which, at the same time, insists upon a firm conformity that guards against the disintegrating nature of rapid change. Whatever the underlying factors, the prospective teacher has to come to grips with them in his or her own manner. This can only be done if they are broadly cognizant of the past and structurally pertinent ideas in their area as well as the contending current ones. Openly and honestly examined the forces that nurtured structure and change can be more readily understood and creatively converted into the qualities of a salubrious teaching experience.

There is a great variety of individual teaching methods in art education. Most of the approaches can be successful if there is a classroom enthusiasm and an adherence to the natural qualities of art [Elementary School, University of Michigan News Service]



THEORETICAL RANGE OF ART EDUCATION

The teacher of art has a seemingly prodigal choice of avenues of approach to teaching; there is a proliferation of theory and an embarrassment of riches in the sources that in one way or another relate to art. He may concentrate on the "whole" child, considering the inherent qualities of the aesthetic and creative experience as one among other important factors that develop the ideal individual. He may focus on what is sensory and immediately "meaningful" in the art experience for the individual, building on this for the student an awareness of his own creative endeavors as well as the art work of others. The teacher may study the developmental stages of children, carefully plotting the maturation process, then deliberately design art activities that are commensurate with each stage of growth. He may utilize the environmental concept that suggests the most rewarding art experience for children is to be found in the patterns and objects of his own everyday living in a kind of aesthetic functionalism and responsible citizenship. Or he may insist upon the inculcation of perceptual or manipulatory skills that supposedly derive from the creative and/or craftsmanlike process.

On the other hand, there may be stress on the analytical and appreciative traits to be engendered as a base for the necessary empathies and insights of a mature relationship with art. The teacher may stimulate self expression for its own sake as an appropriately desirable emotional characteristic or point to the remedial and therapeutic nature of creative work. He may

give prominence to the notion of artistic criteria and standards that emerge from a work of art rather than from the so-called student's needs or he may bring together the art work with other subject areas integrating it as a visualization and expression of interdisciplinary values. Then too, the art class may concentrate on providing a playful dabbling that may become a satisfying personal agility with art to fill the otherwise "empty and wasteful" leisure hours that the greater majority of Americans, workers and white collar alike, may look forward to as against the art teacher who may have a vision of school art as a fulfilling and continuing experience of aesthetic quality that will cut across all the hours of a person's life, providing an expressive and creative base for individual satisfaction.

There are numerous other attitudes, each exerting an influence, commanding a following, and overlapping one another. But whether we generalize in a product-process, a child subject, or individual-society manner, the oppositions or better the polarities, become a confusing array of pedagogies. Though the antagonisms may be artificially imposed and the polarities really ends of a continuum, there is no doubt that some of the attitudes mentioned do conflict with one another when they are dogmatically utilized as desirable methods in a classroom. Of course, all of the factors that have a bearing on the development of children and of consequent teaching attitudes are important; it is the points of stress and the multiple paralleling of concepts which cause the concern for the teacher seeking an amenable philosophy.

In addition, to reiterate, the teacher of art must face up to the opposing ideas of what is to be prized in contemporary life. Though there is a burgeoning of art activity and a corresponding acceptance of a creative involvement, there is also the common supposition that the values of art are peripheral in the dynamics of current society. The acceptance of creative behavior cannot be generally assumed; where it is evidenced, it tends to be tentative, hesitant, and suspicious, always with one eye on the stock market, the productive machinery, or on the button that may send ballistic missiles flying across oceans. In this atmosphere that is further thickened with the lightly held beliefs but overwhelming prejudices of popular culture, it may be somewhat difficult for the teacher of art to disentangle the myriad and confusing values.

Early Development

The teaching of art in the schools has had a history that only infrequently touched that of the history of art itself. In the United States it has been closely allied to the development of public education and popular culture. The spread and shape of public education evidences the social, political, and psychological pressures of the society that was forming it and often mirrors the interests of mass culture.

In a like manner art education has reflected many of the theoretical suppositions, practical applications, and inherent pressures of general education. This has tended to shape the teaching of art, as it has other subject areas, more often in response to external considerations than in terms of

the internal structure of a given subject area. The essentially significant qualities of art as it is created within the context of an artist's understanding have played only an incidental role in the development of art education, while the adjunctive considerations of vocation, social adjustment, psychological development, citizenship, leisure planning, and well rounded personality among a host of others have had a changing but extremely influential effect on the direction of the teaching of art in the public schools. This is more apparent in elementary education than secondary, but exists on both levels.

Though drawing instruction existed in the schools prior to the Civil War, it was not until after 1870 that a deliberate and organized attempt was made to include art in the school curriculum. In the early decades of the nineteenth century, as the birth pangs of public education subsided and the attendant prescriptive attitudes deepened into a severely restricted intellectual emphasis, the pattern of the three R's emerged: reading, 'riting and 'rithmetic. Little room was permitted for the fancies—the later “frills and fads” of the art experience. The frontier pushing society that moved ever westward and the growing industrial revolution made its own demands that permitted little if any intimacy with an aesthetic culture, particularly for the sake of what was generally regarded as a vain and wasteful use of time. The practical considerations of the surroundings, the business of wresting a livelihood from the land, the exigencies of factory labor could not countenance an intent concern for art.

Yet it was the requirements of the industrial revolution itself that prompted the systematic introduction of drawing in the schools, thus formalizing the inclusion of art in the curriculum. Farnum, in a brief historical essay writes, “In the middle of the nineteenth century . . . a group of industrialists in Massachusetts came to the conclusion that skill in drawing and a knowledge of historic forms of ornament were essential to their manufacture, and later, in 1870, an act of the state legislature was passed permitting drawing (“industrial and mechanical”) to be “freely” taught in any city and town, and making “free” instruction compulsory in cities and towns of over 10,000 inhabitants.”¹

Horace Mann, whose influence in early American education was both profound and salubrious, was particularly wedded to an extension of the curriculum to include more than the three R's. “Drawing is a form of writing and should be taught with it.”² Fred Logan, in commenting on Mann's inclusion of drawing as an appropriate experience for school children rightly interprets this dictum as “. . . the copying of forms.”³ Though there was a vague hope of fostering some kind of “artistic” experience there was no real sense of the aesthetic needs of children, of expressive quality or of creative capacity that entered into the beginning ideas

¹ R. B. Farnum, “The Early History of Art Education,” *Fortieth Yearbook NSSE, Art in American Life and Education* (Bloomington, Ill.: Public School Publishing Co., 1941), p. 446

² Frederick Logan (quoting Mann), *Growth of Art in American Schools* (New York: Harper and Bros., 1955), p. 21

³ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

of art education, or the appreciation of art for its own sake, for that matter. The drawing slate was to be taken away if the children "played" with it. Rather, "Horace Mann admired drawing . . . because (it) . . . might answer the criticism that the schools did little for the future mechanic or industrial worker. Manual skill, accurate judgment of line and proportion, ought to be good background for a shipwright, a hook-keeper, a weaver, a carpenter, indeed all tradesman."⁴

It was this strong vocational interest, the desire to educate adequately trained personnel for the manufacture of general consumer needs and to staff a blossoming technology that prompted the inclusion of art in the schools. It was to be a pedagogical device in its simplest and most utilitarian manner, not complementing the three R's but supplementing them in a much lower form. This is a far cry from the revolutionary new thinking, for instance, of one of the finest American designers of the later nineteenth century, the architect Louis H. Sullivan. He was developing the visual symbols and intellectual concepts among which was the fertile idea that "form follows function" which laid the groundwork for Frank Lloyd Wright and a later modern design that was not confined to architecture alone. He wrote in his *Kindergarten Chats*:

When the mind is actively and vitally at work, for its own creative uses, it has no time for word building: words are too clumsy: you have no time to select and group them. Hence you must think in terms of images, of pictures, of states of feeling, of rhythm. The well trained, well organized and well-disciplined mind works with remarkable rapidity and with luminous intensity; it will body forth combinations, in mass, so complex, so far-reaching that you could not write them down in years. Writing is but the slow, snail-like creeping of words, climbing laboriously, over a little structure that resembles the thought: meanwhile the mind has gone on and on, here and yonder and back and out and back again.⁵

However, this kind of thinking broadly supporting the idea of art education as expression was several decades in the future in implementation, indicating the depressing lag of genuine change that exists so often between our most developed thinkers and the practices in our educational institutions.

Method and Substance

Early drawing experience was tightly controlled, rigidly prescribed, and periodically progressive in nature, even though there was participation by the student directly with "art." Exacting and craftsmanlike exercises were considered appropriate activities for young children as well as for the teachers in training indicating the stress on method rather than substance that so tenaciously dominates the strictly pedagogical mind. Though we now know that these were too exacting a performance to demand of young children both from a psychological and aesthetic viewpoint, the lingering security of predetermined method is still a potent crutch for many

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 23

⁵ Louis Sullivan, *Kindergarten Chats* (New York: Whittenborn, 1950), p. 50.

teachers. For instance, though art educators have waged a kind of holy war against mimeographed "turkeys for Thanksgiving" and the mass of patterns available to teachers on the elementary level, they are still very much evident in many classrooms. On all levels of art teaching we still find remnants of the ideas of Walter Smith, who became Director of Art Education for Massachusetts in 1872. In his introduction to a teachers' manual, he writes: ". . . thus, sharp points to pencils, and clean hands and rubber, and a book neither dog-eared, defiled, nor crumpled, should be absolutely insisted on; and incorrigibles should be made to draw upon slates only until they can be trusted in contact with white paper without defiling it." * The broader admonitions to achieve neatness in art work is redolently reminiscent of this atmosphere. It is most noticeable, however, in crafts, shop and mechanical drawing classes where it, no doubt, is quite necessary though often at the expense of creative design.

Of course the discipline that is supposedly inherent in deliberately controlling the work of the student may be a desirable quality in one aspect of art education. There has been a current and growing emphasis in this direction, of developing visual problems which have defined and more exact aims of learning the elements of art as a basis for their knowing manipulation, providing a visual vocabulary. The stress of a more or less exact experience in art certainly has its value, especially if it induces an experience in depth and particularly when it is set next to the arbitrary and totally undisciplined activity that does occur in a good number of classrooms today. Nevertheless, the stress on procedure and method, the preoccupation with supposed norms of visual understanding is in contrast to the skeptical attitude that most artists have concerning strict formulation in either artistic creation or appreciation. There are no recipes in art other than in the chemical constituents of the materials employed. The realization of form is uniquely arrived at. It may be limited or completely negated if an intrusive methodology impresses and obscures the art itself, if the prescriptions from an earlier time are too deeply ingrained, forming arbitrarily correct patterns of method and substance.

The Arbitrary Synthesis of Practical and Aesthetic Qualities

The vocational stress of art education had an interesting corollary at the time that reflects one of the major controversies in contemporary art education. This revolves about the separation of fine art from industrial art or crafts, the distinctions that are sometimes made between drawing and design, and is important in forming the values that art education tends to support.

During the beginning stages of formal art education there were apparently no distinctions: drawing and crafts training were related and often taught as one. For the child in the nineteenth-century classroom there was no divorce between the utilitarianism of design and the aesthetic significance of drawing (or art in its larger connotations as some art educators

* Walter Smith, *Teachers' Manual of Freehand Drawing and Designing* (Boston: 1873)

are wont to imply). The training that prospective teachers received under Smith, if they completed the full course, which was not mandatory, included painting, water color, and sculpture as well as the more vocationally oriented projects such as architectural elevations, diagrammatic rendering, and related activities. This "cafeteria" style curriculum has set the pattern, though in a modified manner, for the training of art teachers ever since. What is of importance in this approach is what it led to in the schools. As Logan notes, "The entire curriculum of the first quarter of a century (after the initiation of formal art education) obviously considered drawing and art education generally, and the beginnings of what we now call manual training and shop work, as basically a united study."⁷ However, the stress on the mechanical and manipulatory aspects of drawing, the tight idea of one craftsmanship of artistic process, the lean products that lacked general artistic merit as well as expressive power are only a few of the reasons that the unity did not remain. Art went off in a direction that was more promising for its purposes, splitting away from the unoriginal technique emphasis that exists in shop training.

Logan obviously deplores the fact that this separation has occurred and has become a growing practice over the last half century, ascribing this in part to the "growing division of subject-matter fields" that took possession of the schools. He feels there is an artificial separation of art and craft and advocates, "Every trend in industrial and furniture design, in professional art education, in educational philosophy, indicates a reunion of the teaching of the arts and shop crafts in our school systems." (He goes on to emphasize his point.) "Here is an area where the Massachusetts Normal Art School was doing a better job for its time than we are doing today."⁸

However, though we cannot question the unity that probably did exist in the earlier schools, we can look askance at its quality and its appropriateness for the individual child. The very fact that many of the methods that were employed in the late eighteen hundreds are regarded by contemporary art educators as destructive of creative development and niggardly dogmatic in aesthetic insight in itself contradicts the efficacy of the "unified" approach, at least, of that time. Even more damaging, to reiterate, is the quality of the "art" that was produced which with our admittedly hindsight understanding, we refer to as dull, banal, restricted, sentimental, and academic, when it was not garishly flamboyant in its applied design or heavy with pretentiousness. The child was rarely treated as an individual and his art never was regarded as expression. He was merely to train and sharpen one of the faculties which would be socially and economically useful in keeping with the primitive psychological ideas of the day. Though this was to be remedied, if not overly counterbalanced with progressive thought later, and could be blamed on the pressures and prejudices of the times, the implied concept is that the unification of fine art and crafts was and still is a desirable goal, that exists outside of time.

⁷ Frederick Logan, *Growth of Art in American Schools* (New York: Harper and Bros., 1955), p. 72.

⁸ Frederick Logan, *ibid.*, p. 73.

Actually, what did happen was that the child became a vessel into which was indiscriminately poured the supposed accumulation of artistic technique and a limited aesthetic lore that arbitrarily cut across all of the hierarchies of creative endeavor. And even this is questionable, for what in reality was created did fit into the framework of shoemaking, weaving, carpentry, and tool making, but hardly into the aesthetic framework of art. It was the economic and productive needs of a rapidly accelerating society that dictated the inclusion of art education in the curriculum, not any legitimate ideas of aesthetics or personal expression.

THE SEPARATION OF FINE AND APPLIED ARTS

It was only as the art educators grew in sophistication and understanding, evolving an intrinsically appropriate philosophy that the separation of visual disciplines became not only inevitable, but desirably so. Though there were many surface similarities between fine art and crafts, there was the emerging recognition of fundamental differences that led to an "art-for-art's-sake" movement, swinging the pendulum far over to another extreme. This was not simply due to the prevailing trend toward a division of labor or a stress on specialization. It was more basically an awareness of philosophical distinctions that insisted upon, in a practical sense, differing educational factors and methods to suit differing ends.

The fine arts are essentially involved with unique, expressive forms that communicate such intangibles as emotion, meaning, and "beauty" for their own sake with no real "use" other than the gratification of aesthetic sensitivity, if one discounts the popular idea of uplifting the mind through "culture." They are concerned with genuine values on a comparatively abstract and conceptual plane but capable of being felt through a sensuous realization and as such create the most intense symbols of meaning a society can produce. While there is an important factor of value in the crafts as well, they usually are utilitarian in outlook. Many of the factors in craft design are given ones, largely predetermined either in terms of tradition, shape, size, or in material and in application, while these design factors are never as binding, if at all, for the fine arts. There are other distinctions which are dealt with elsewhere. It is sufficient to say that a responsible and justifiable argument can be marshalled to support the differences, even when there is an idealistic desire not to do so. This understanding, either consciously or not, led to the separation that may have occurred simply because it had to, just as the development of creative expression in the fine arts was gradually divorced from the work of artisans or others engaged in utilitarian production of a visual nature.

Historical Perspectives

There are many historical and cultural reasons for this perhaps unfortunate but necessary dichotomy, though they are amply documented in many other books and would, in this space require much too lengthy a dissertation. Only the main points can be briefly mentioned. The simpler and



The pupil's range of sensory and manipulative experience in art is largely dependent upon the opportunities for exploration provided by individual art teachers, whether in the fine or applied arts (Pittsburgh Public Schools)

more cohesive productive schemes of primitive societies permitted, indeed encouraged, the integration of the symbolic, the purely decorative—the aesthetic aspects of a piece of work with its utilitarian values. The early artist-craftsman had an artistic Eden in which to create that was not complicated by the intricacies of an overly complex and multileveled culture. In the relative innocent simplicity of his cave or hut he fashioned objects and forms which naturally blended the aesthetic and utilitarian into masterful works of art. However, when the complexity of a developing society did come into play and the productive systems assumed an instrumental as well as a class intricacy, the pristine relationship was shattered. As Dewey notes, "The divorce of useful and fine art signifies even more than does the departure of science from the traditions of the past. The difference was not instituted in modern times. It goes as far back as the Greeks when the useful arts were carried on by slaves, and 'base mechanics' and shared in 'the low esteem' in which the latter were held. Architects, builders, sculptors, painters, musical performers were artisans. Only those who worked in the medium of words were esteemed artists, since their activities did not involve the use of hands, tools and physical materials."⁹ This changed little during the Middle Ages and through the

⁹ John Dewey, *Art as Experience* (New York: Minton, Balch, 1934), p. 341.

beginnings of the Renaissance when art was still regarded as common to all of the processes of manufacture. Art was considered an essential part of the artisan's training in the master-pupil and guild atmosphere, a necessary condition of his performance as a workman. A knowing understanding of the elements of art, of color, of drawing, of composition were as necessary as computation, tool handling, and crafts techniques. Artisans were not visual philosophers, pursuers of dreams, or symbolic creators though in fact their work often reached these heights. Though his efforts upheld a sacred doctrine, the artisan was not always regarded as one of the elite. This was changing, however, as the patterns of the Renaissance became bolder and more clear. It is only during the high Renaissance that the artist achieves the pinnacle described by Battista Alberti in 1436, "Painting contains . . . this virtue that any master painter who sees his work adored will feel himself considered another god."¹⁰ But painting and sculpture had by this time been divorced from the more utilitarian concerns that controlled it in the preceding centuries. Though the content was religious, the utilization of art in a didactic function had changed so drastically from the Byzantine times that one can paradoxically claim that Renaissance art despite its subject matter was a celebration of man's secular nature, and that the artist was a divine being who "makes the dead seem alive." The symbolic and the aesthetic factors are the most important here, while the crass functions of utility have been left far behind.

Though the Renaissance artist still combined in his image the qualities of an artisan and designer (he planned buildings, laid out gardens, formulated mathematical theorems, and built objects that were not painting and sculpture), he actually was creating monuments, the "practical" utility of which was only a secondary concern. A Michelangelo or a Leonardo was very much different in kind from the artisans that had preceded them and their own contemporary journeymen craftsmen. They ushered in on one level, and a revolutionary one, the division between the fine arts and the useful that is a part of the modern consciousness and was heightened later by such solitary giants as Rembrandt, Coya, Van Cogh, and Picasso. However, the divinity of the artist has become a more likely modern counterpart, the "genius" of the artist. Painting and sculpture may not be the only forms of creative expression today that have a fundamentally indivisible quality of aesthetics, nor the artist the only and relatively "pure" creative spirit. However, they are still largely regarded, not only by the critics, but by the lay public as well as the essential core of the fine arts, exploring its fundamental intrinsic nature as well as its spiritual relevance to man.

Internal Pressures of Technology

It was not until the advent of the Industrial Revolution that this became a clear and recognized demarcation—the distinction between artist and artisan. The increasing complexity of production could not allow for the

¹⁰ Leon Battista Alberti, *On Painting*, trans John R. Spencer, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1956), p. 63.

conditions that nurtured the earlier workers; it could not tolerate the spread of time, the lacks of specialization of labor and the essentially wasteful behavior, in productive terms, of the aesthetically inclined artisan. As is obvious in our surroundings, the machine has come to dominate our means of production and in its first century of development, it almost totally ignored the aesthetic quality of its products. As a parallel development, popular culture has pursued the aim of *democratic profit*, catering to the least common denominator of taste. This created a situation in which the artistic forms were severed from their traditional places in the scheme of production. New architecture, painting, sculpture, and other high graphic means came to be associated with the studio and artist, and all other products were relegated to the workshop and the craftsman. Educationally, this led to the independent art school that was meant for the professional and the establishment of official academies that presumed to regulate the tastes of the artists and their patrons. The common man was left with his labors and his mechanical operations that were devoid of most aesthetic qualities. The manufacturing processes themselves were predicated on efficiency, utility, and economy, profit being the prime motivation. The idea of beauty of form, of grace, of design, of aesthetic delight, or of spiritual expression disappeared or was aborted in vulgar terms when related to products of manufacture. If any art was to be a part of the manufacturing process, it was something that was added to the essentially mechanical means of production, rather than integrated with it. This led to the appalling taste and unmitigated ugliness of the general products that flooded the early consumer and industrial markets. The international exhibitions of art and manufactured goods such as the one in London in 1851



The craftsman who combines technical skill with the traditional cultivation of sensitive and artistic forms is a disappearing element in contemporary society [Corning Glass Works]

or the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876 literally showed acres of tasteless and "horrendous" design. The spirit of the times aesthetically is summed up by Oliver Larkin as, ". . . whether it took the form of a picture or a chair, a statue or a stove, it must be a prevarication, a torturing of materials up to their limits of endurance."¹¹

Accommodations and Reactions

Obviously, the fruitful relationship that had earlier existed between the normal daily experiences of mankind and the more timeless aspects of art had ceased to function as a serious force. In the nineteenth century, if the two were bound together, not only was the utilitarian object made a travesty of taste, but art itself became trite, spurious, and shallowly academic. It has been indicated that it was largely the economics of production which brought about this separation. This is more profoundly supported by the American philosopher of the times, Henry Adams, who said the break occurred when the Virgin ceased to be a power and became merely a picture—when the Dynamo became the new symbol of veneration. Thorsten Veblen, the economist-philosopher, pointed out that conspicuous consumption became an index of great wealth, art being one of the conspicuously consumed "commodities"; therefore, it could not be bound up with the ordinary or the currently created popular styles. Whatever the reason, the educated individual turned to the forms of the past to satisfy his aesthetic needs while the creative artist pursued his own images. This is one of the reasons that in architecture, for instance, we saw a neoclassicism arise, with many buildings aping the façades of Greek and Roman temples. The artist who catered to this backward looking, painted and sculpted in a manner reminiscent of past glories and his "kitsch" or popular counterpart in a soft sentimental glow that applauded uncritical taste and gave rise to what is commonly called "calendar art," the darling and criterion of popular taste.

There was a reaction as well in the actual philosophy of the means of production. William Morris and John Ruskin in England were passionate advocates of a return to handwork, to the satisfactions of personal creation before the mechanical age that served mankind's needs. Morris advocated a guild system, in a kind of medievalistic fervor, wherein the workman still had control of manufacture of an object from beginning to end in an atmosphere which affirmed the values of wholeness and craftsmanship. He insisted that the industrial processes pauperized man's spiritual and aesthetic nature as well as making poor robots out of the workmen. His views were influential and flowed into the thinking of American art educators, supplementing the ideas of "art for art's sake" with an emphasis on the joys of "handwork." However, the concept was foredoomed to failure, for the machine was not to be denied; a return to the guild system was like turning the clock back, denying hundreds of years of history. Ignoring the economic and political implications of Morris' ideas, the translation of the

¹¹ Oliver Larkin, *Art and Life in America* (New York: Rinehart, 1949), p. 240.

primacy of handwork into American art class practices had only a thin veneer and an inescapable flavor of watered down dilletantism, without the supporting social structure.

THE EMERGING SIGNIFICANCE OF MODERN FINE ART

Of much more significance was the modern spirit that became evident in the new artists, which necessarily paralleled an alienation from the moral and artistic ugliness of the industrial age. This encompassed the rehabilitation of the artist both as a spokesman-creator of his times and as a maker of symbolic forms. In the former case, the artist was to claim a new spirit of artistic and personal freedom which would unhinge his dependence on older visual and empty aesthetic conventions, while in the making of forms he was to be provocative, experimental, and insistent upon a vital aesthetic integrity that was sufficient unto itself, not requiring the plaudits of the mass of people or the representation of an academic reality. He generated private myths in new forms which later became the conscience of his culture. The artist could then be restored to a sense of values appropriate to his reason for being. He and his work had no need to be justified in the marketplace. This resulted in an unfortunate but necessary estrangement from the public and provided little ground for mutual understanding. Yet the artist was then unencumbered, permitting a free play of his emotions, intellect and spirit and his sympathies for the visual material with which he was concerned. Artists such as Cezanne, Van Gogh, Rodin, and later, Picasso, Mondrian, Miro, and countless others in a variety of visual disciplines thus ushered in and intensified the modern spirit in art which has developed in a lusty and unabashed manner over the last century. This new spirit of the artist, either as a "hero" image of integrity, as a uniquely committed being, as a romantic rebel and visionary, or as a free-wheeling speculator, producing an art that was justifiable both in its own terms and as an aesthetic measure of man, has never really found its way into public art education. Though the forms that he has created have had a very undisputed influence, it is more because they seeped into the thinking of the art teacher almost by osmosis rather than enthusiastic or deliberate acceptance.

The separation between the fine and the so-called applied arts was an accomplished fact. Nevertheless, the desire to re engage the two elements in a fruitful unity has never really disappeared from the thinking, not only of art educators, but of social critics and many designers themselves. The stress on the integrated social needs of aesthetics and utility, of the dynamo and the palette, underlies much of contemporary philosophy in the teaching of all of the humanities as well as in art education. John Dewey put the idea succinctly, "As long as art is the beauty parlor of civilization, neither art nor civilization is secure."¹² This sentiment colored the thinking of much theory in art education during the first half of this century.

¹² John Dewey, *Art as Experience* (New York. Minton, Balch, 1934), p. 344.

THE IDEAL OF PRAGMATIC AIMS IN ART EDUCATION

The very decades that see art developing as a symbolic form that is deliberately detached from the consciousness of everyday living, give birth to a parallel exhortation on the part of philosophers and educators to bring the two together. This may be a deliberate response to the undesirability of a fragmented situation, but it does not always take into consideration the very factors that produce the insecure and disconnected yet necessarily divided parts of our society. Education should be encouraged to teach toward ideal goals, but with a clear recognition of the obstacles and dangers that lie in the path and the real goals that are actually achieved. The commitment to a broad and democratic base in education cannot permit any statement of aims other than the best and most exhaustive kind of curriculum, geared as much to the individual as it is to society. Obviously this would include the productive means of our current technology, the consumer goods it supplies, the everyday environment that it creates and the development on the part of the student of a personal and discriminating sensibility, so that the environment and the objects in it will be collectively pleasing as well as aesthetically and individually rewarding.

There have been many scholars and other interested observers who have given their attention and thinking to this attitude, attempting to set up an interrelatedness between the various arts and the current technology of society. The aesthetic ideas are similar to those that were so much in evidence at the Bauhaus and articulated by such artist teachers as Albers, Kandinsky, Bayer, and Gyorgy Kepes who transposed some of the ideas to the United States along with Moholy-Nagy. Others such as Herbert Read, Lewis Mumford, Sigfried Gideon, and Jolin Kouwenhoven are only among the better known advocates of establishing lines across the qualities of art and those of a machine culture. There are many who would favor the integration of art and industry, seeing or implying the necessity as well as the desirability of a designed world. In art education, Fred Logan is one of the most sincere, convincing, and articulate of these advocates, suggesting that the designer is the appropriate and more necessary image for art education to emulate, rather than the esoteric, aloof, obscure, and somewhat exotic fine artist. They point to the actual conditions that set mass aesthetic patterns—the houses that people live in and the prevailing concepts of interior design, the buildings that are otherwise serving productive functions and the booming ideas of architecture, the commercial advertising, illustration, and typography that underlay so much of normal daily vision, the expanding fields of industrial design, photography, and the various other applied areas through which art considerations are provided for everyone. These, it is argued, are the very stuff out of which the average consciousness of art is developed; consequently, they must be a central thesis in the spread of artistic knowledge and sensibility. This leads to the belief that art may ethically redirect the energies of mankind into the development of newer, more positive, functionally proper, and aesthetically

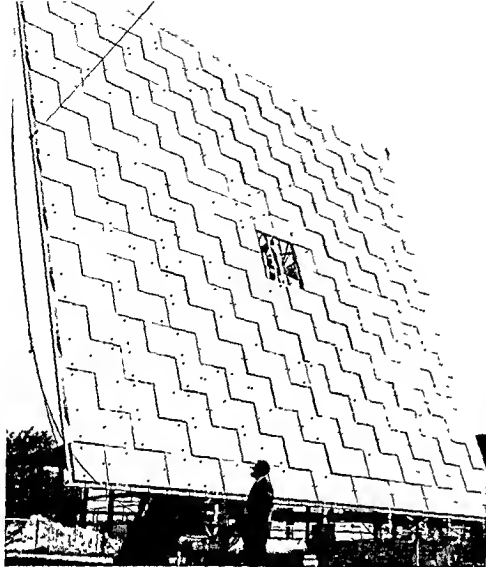


The blend of fine and applied arts was a natural condition in less complex and primitive cultures. This Mexican Funeral Urn is a typical example of the daily products combining aesthetic design and craft created in pretechnological societies. [Collection, IBM]

Art Education and "Vernacular" Design

Kouwenhoven's thesis of the "vernacular" sources of design, for example, can easily serve as one of the theoretical structures for an art education which aims at sensitizing the student to the need and quality of good design based upon vital, meaningful experience encountered in normal existence. The supposedly characteristic democratic yet functional responses to the problems of a surrounding technology and a mass culture can serve as the aesthetic base of form.

The intricacies and involvements of the design process and the approaches of the designer would become the fundamental basis for the development of experience in art education. Though this would not always, or even frequently, rely upon the specifics of commercial designing, the philosophical considerations of craft, social living, self expression, and contemporary attitudes toward technology and its popular visual manifesta-



New conceptual explorations into the relationships of design, function, and engineering develop novel visual forms from vernacular sources. The Army's Solar Furnace [PHOTO U.S. Dept. of Defense]

resolving artistic problems and creating form. Yet, it is, perhaps, impossible to divorce the value aspects of both the processes and products of art and their significance to the individual as not only individual expression but as social taste making. The advocates of design oriented art education support this contention. What is questionable is the emphasis given to the problem solving technique that is employed, to the utopian presentations that generally refuse to take stock of the real state of the "designed" environment and to the instrumental values of art that are supposedly the road to developed personalities. Art, indeed, becomes a quality which in its intangible, intense, and mystifying ways may be dispensed with, its remaining "methods" of insight and creation, not as self transcendent factors, but as almost practical tools with which to get on with the world's work.

THE NEED FOR VALUE APPRAISAL OF TECHNOLOGICAL DESIGN IN ART EDUCATION

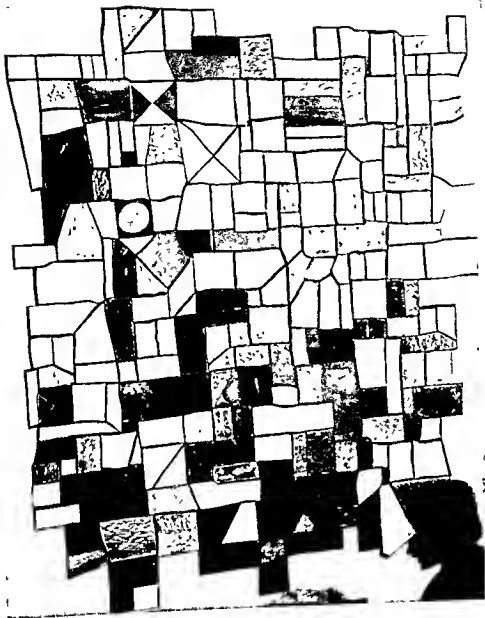
It certainly is, at the very least, somewhat confusing to remove the term art from art education. This is much more disastrous when it leads to an

involvement with the marginal values of a consumer society that merely requires entertainment in its art rather than expression, practical value rather than a difficult wisdom, social adjustment rather than individual commitment, fun in its creative processes rather than fulfillment, and hobby, do-it-yourself, by-the-numbers "meritment" rather than significant creation of form. Certainly, most art educators, support the more profound aims of art education, upholding the intrinsic values of the aesthetic experience. Nevertheless, an unsophisticated stress is often put on the momentary satisfactions and the instrumental qualities of what is essentially an aesthetically unanchored creative experience in the classroom. This may antagonize or confuse those very values of sensibility and of the value of art as an end rather than a means that everyone seemingly agrees should be engendered in all children.

In emphasizing the process alone, concentrating primarily upon "adjusted" growth and arbitrary pressures to develop a sensitivity and a team-



The prospective art teacher is expected to learn the skills of a variety of crafts, such as ceramics, to supplement the basic knowledge of art principles underlying all visual creativeness



Aluminum foil wall covering and heating unit by Ilonka Karasz. A projection into the future of the combining of the fine and applied arts into an integrated production unit of aesthetic and utilitarian elements [Photo Courtesy Aluminum Company of America]

ing conducive "to creative living," there is a thinking that is somewhat askew. The environment which is made up of things, products, and objects (as well as intangible tastes, attitudes, and ideas) loses none of its import in a material sense, though the evaluation of its "things" is set off in some limbo of uncertainty. The longer range of social and aesthetic meaning is confined to an immediacy of reaction that need not find justification or support in any tangible or external manner in the concrete forms of art or even in the commodities of the day. The student is set adrift just as much as are the larger aesthetic concerns in a technological matrix that generally prizes utility, wealth, and diversion above most other values. A pleasant and ideal instrumental situation is evolved that has only the loosest connections to the intrinsic concerns of art.

The chief-fault in this entire attitude of integrating the arts and uses of technology, lies in this idea that sees art chiefly as a means, almost as an adjusting technique, essentially denying it its own sense of being. It pre-

sents art as a "way," whereby the values of life in a machine dominated and technically productive, efficiently coordinated and architecturally planned environment could be programmed for the common good. In this instance, this means the elevation of taste and the building toward a new, bright future that has not ruled out collective aesthetic applications in daily functions. But a corollary would seem to insist upon the existence of an almost definitive body of knowledge, that art is a process that merely requires practice, that sensitivity is the result of efficiently establishing the correct connections between varying social points and cultural relationships.

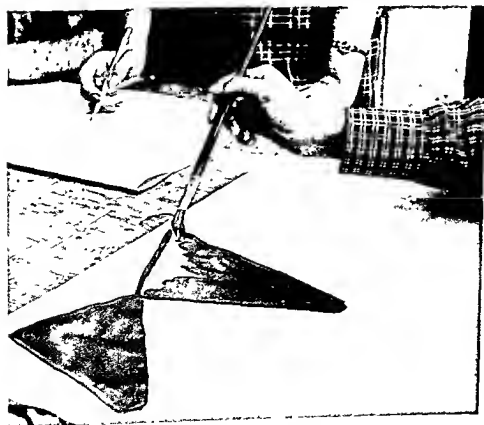
Art in this sense becomes an engineered understanding, amenable to the manipulations of programmed methodologies. Simply cover a sufficient number of variables with an input of correct knowledge and learning in art would occur. The presumption is that "learning" in art is fundamentally a progressive affair, with the necessity of having to uncover the "correct" understanding and association of variables in order to achieve proper design. The designer, for instance, has a backlog of prototypes to study, the assistance of the motivational researcher, the specifications of the engineer or the sales manager, the system of the color wheel and other art "aids" and the whole gamut of behavioral responses that the psychologists are providing, the imagery of the camera, the pantograph and an extensive array of other mechanical gadgets as well as still additional identifiable factors. Cleverly and professionally juggling the component qualities, the good designer supposedly comes up with correct and pleasing forms as well as profitable ones. The thought may be somewhat facetious, yet, in essence, the instrumental approach to art education would almost have to insist upon similar considerations. The philosophy of an integrated art program would have to develop certain correct rather than felt responses to presented problems, logically arising out of the search for a related design. This supports a consideration of "correct" ways of creating art, and it is this factor which weakens the entire viewpoint. For if there is any one idea that most artists would concur in, and that all art history points to, it is that there is no one right way to create art. There are instead many and innumerable ways of practicing art, that in the final analysis, the development of artistic form is very much the product of inner vision, combining the unique perceptions and emotions of the individual with the sensuous and symbolic possibilities of the art material within a cultural context.

INDIVIDUAL AND CREATIVE FREEDOM IN ART EDUCATION

This latter point does not necessarily deny the relative worth of an integrated art program, but it certainly would not permit it to be accepted as a central thesis in the development of any intrinsically meaningful understanding of art education. The inherent limitations seem somewhat evident, upon closer examination, of this hopeful but frequently misguided approach to the teaching of art. It would severely circumscribe any open-ended and rebelliously creative tendencies in the student, aiming for a tasteful but careful awareness, a proper yet circumscribed sensitivity, and a

liberally developed adjustment to the given problems and conditions of society, ruling out, for the most part, the sorrowful discontent or disenchantment that poetry often points to as a part of the human condition. Essentially, there is a rejecting of true independence and a deflecting of originality that may not conform to social expectancies, that may, at first, and perhaps forever, be shocking and *more often than not* housed in the introspective sentence and intense symbolically transforming and mysterious aspects of the individual involved creatively with art. The individual in reaching out for authentic and felt experiences through art may sometimes evidence an obstreperous creativity and an insightful imagination that could hurdle over the imposed patterned and designed technology of the moment, wanting to divest himself of its images and practices rather than strengthening them. It may be difficult, if not impossible, to sense spiritual and significantly aesthetic qualities in a mass produced object or in collective design wrought by committee procedure. Or if these qualities are sensed or otherwise hoped for, the individual emotions and intense personal symbol making that has always been a part of art may atrophy for want of honest concern and unmitigated involvement. Some new condition of a collective nature would supplant it, reflecting the "other directed" vision of a corporately designed world.

The current synthesis of the fine and applied arts blends into a utopian thinking that has little real reference to expressiveness through art and a minimum insight into existing productive conditions and their relationships to art. It presupposes that the productive factors in democratic culture are



The genuinely expressive act in art on all levels is a unique one, growing out of sensory exploration and symbolic inventiveness, whatever the theoretical educational context.

geared, at least in some measure, to altruistic and aesthetic concerns or to creating a new enjoyable environment and tasteful, egalitarian and collective visual patterning that transcends profit taking and other business concerns. It opts for a reconstruction of the social order, though it, paradoxically, at the same time, imposes the mechanics of production as an almost fixed factor that has to be contended with. Though the emphasis is put upon the sensibility of the child, centering the methodology around stimulating individual growth, a duality (which it had hoped would be overcome) is in reality intensified, that of child vs. society or the individual vs. culture. The optimism of the outlook, ground in reverent consideration of the social good, by educating the individual through progressive exposure that builds an awareness "of the art and beauty in the world about him" nevertheless, circumscribes the conditions of art and provides prescriptions dangerously approaching the mechanical and impeding the truly creative.

The obvious stress on the aesthetic that genuine art experiences require need not rule out the democratic ends and social harmony that is an indigenous philosophic tenet of American education. Yet, it would be superficial to link art with democracy, or art education with social and environmental engineering simply because of the desire to see the elements in a positive relationship. The qualities of art possess their own characteristics, their development often an individually expressive affair that has only tentative or cursory relationships to group or social goals.

The teaching of art, if it is to have effective and significant influence upon students, requires a creative freedom. It must be free from any deliberately impinging attitudes, its growth the directly felt, expressively conceived and sensuously executed creation of aesthetic forms individually organized by the creator. This is often an intangible process, subject to internal idiosyncracies and unconscious motivations. It appears to provide the most original, satisfying, and individual results if it is spontaneously generated and related to already existing works of art, to a tradition of seeking original insights and new forms.

The technological landscape and the forms of popular culture cannot be considered by most observers as artistic, or their purposes overly aesthetic. The intention to make them so is not sufficient to ward off their negative influences. The value aspects have a way of directing the shaping of forms which cannot be overcome by slogans. Similarly, art education has to guard itself against the other extreme, the esthetes, the professionally obscure avant-garde, the insistent purveyors of the latest art fads for their own fashionable sake. These have little of lasting educational value to offer.

Art education has to remain an openended process, subject to controversy, and contending ideas, but always committed to the underlying concepts of individual sovereignty, aesthetic merit, and creative expression.

Further Backgrounds of Art Education

Art teaching has a meaning for America, and should be more general and significant. The problem of civilizing this enormous country is not finished. The teaching of art must be directed toward the enrichment of the student's life. The teacher must be a guiding personality for the student, and develop his sensibility and his power for "feeling into" animate, or inanimate things, with sympathy.

HANS HOFMANN

THE child centered curriculum, the reconstruction of society through education, the concern for practical synthesis, the stress on methodology, on objective measurement, on creativity, the idea of natural activity as against intellectual rigor in the classroom, and the classroom as a microcosm of life itself are but a few of the ideas that have theoretically prevailed in educational thinking during the twentieth century. All of these have had an influence on art education.

PROGRESSIVE INFLUENCES

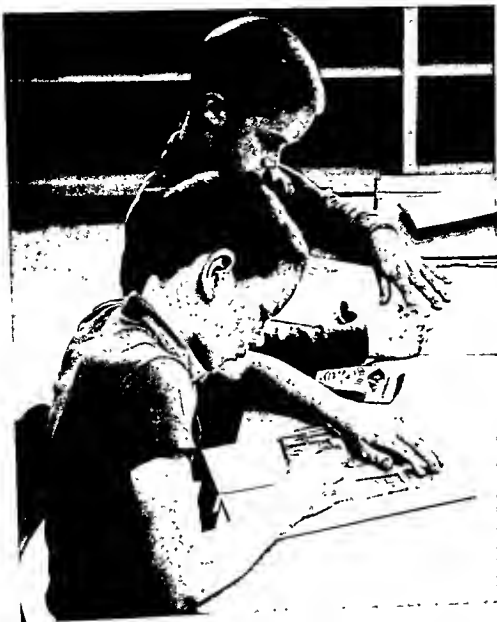
Many of the ideals that have oriented the thinking of education over the past half century and provided the basis for healthy controversy have grown out of the philosophical ideas of John Dewey and the many resultant theoretical strands of the Progressivists. These have had a direct bearing on art education, as well as a general orientation. It would be unfortunate to underestimate the ideal influence that Dewey has had on all of education and the various redirections it has been exposed to since World War I. At the same time it would be folly to conclude that progressive education has had any other than a diffused effect in the truly revolutionary direction that was implied by Dewey's educational philosophy in other than as an ideally stimulating force. A compromised and adulterated philosophy actually was developed, a pastiche from a variety of sources and pressures that had been uncovered or felt, arbitrarily synthesized and frequently distorted under Progressivism's banner, in art education as in more general fields.

The fervent belief in the individual proceeded from the democratic and liberalizing influences, though the underlying base of thinking has often been patronizing or even faulty. For instance, Dewey at a late date deplored the intense emphasis on methodology, even though he stressed teaching method in early doctrine, pointing to teachers being taught the right things in the wrong ways and the confusion of means and ends. Nevertheless, an immense literature became broadly evident extolling the new virtues of experimentalism; the concept and all of its ramifications were strongly advocated in the schools, engendering many changes in educational structure and procedure. The individual was generally placed in the context of society and the teaching idea became one of adjustment to individual and social conditions, any reconstruction of society being implicitly presented rather than explicitly planned for. A frequently fragmented scientific method became a central article of faith stressing empirical "doing." The statement became the object of a lush social curriculum that included an intensification of art teaching.

The resulting growth supposedly developed along individually paced methods that offered subject areas of education in terms of meeting the needs of the student, both as a unique personality and as a member of society. It is because of these aims that the arts fit into the curriculum. Art was regarded as one of the necessities of student expression and culture. At its best, a lexicon of significant pedagogical properties has resulted, designed not as an absolute dictionary of teaching, but among the more perceptive schoolmen, as a continuing examination of student, environment, and their interaction, the subject acting as a communicating device, the individual student, the seeker after and activator of experience, and the teacher as beneficent guide.

In a very positive sense, the progressive movement shook the schools free from a deadening attitude that ignored the worth of the individual and concentrated on outmoded scholastic values. All of the subject areas were appraised and new important ones added to the curriculum. Most thoughtful critics have accepted this reorganization and believe it would be, not only reactionary but disastrous, to return to the hard and fast curriculum and teaching methods of the turn of the century variety. On the other hand, the indiscriminate mass approach obviously has been dissatisfying and relatively unsuccessful in a variety of areas and frequently referred to as anti-intellectual as well as failing as a properly serious taste-maker or cultural uplifter. The early vital and educationally revolutionary spirit of progressivism is to be courted, in the opinion of many liberal thinkers, though its direction requires mature understanding and serious but critical commitment and a reassessment of methods in all areas.

Art education owes whatever continuing foothold it has in the schools to the preceding educational change. The humanities themselves in a fuller range assumed a more vital aspect. The student was recognized and expectantly treated as an individual with inherent worth and dignity possessing a creative potential that could be realized theoretically in art, even if only as a means of self realization that circumvented aesthetic



Even the simplest involvement with art in school should reflect an aesthetic and personally valued quality of expression.
[PHOTO: Stephen C Summer]

standards. The schools were seen as viable operating institutions in which there could reside a dream of achieving the greater good of democratic living, through the hopefully not finite potential of each person, "scientifically" and harmoniously resolving the inherent tensions of new experience. Education became a way of life for many rather than enhancement of living for the fortunate few.

A Way of Life

A characteristic example of this idea is to be found in the four axioms Italo L. De Francesco¹ states form the basis of American education: (1) We believe in education. (2) We believe in the worth of the individual. (3) We believe in a democratic society. (4) We believe in freedom.

¹ Italo L. De Francesco, *Art Education, Its Means and Ends* (New York. Harper and Bros, 1958), pp. 30-34

These he paraphrases in relationship to art education as follows: (1) We believe in education for all, therefore art education is for all the children of all the people. (2) We believe in the worth of the individual, therefore, one of the major tasks of art education is to develop individual potentialities and unique personal expression. (3) We believe in a democratic society, therefore, art education must foster a wholesome relationship and a feeling of responsibility to the social group. (4) We believe in freedom, therefore, one of the tasks of art education is to foster freedom of expression.

Despite the positive aims the fact that an uncritical freedom of expression may on occasion be at odds with the social good, may perhaps be antagonistic to the majority attitude and even their welfare is not given any credence. More important, the self sufficiency of the art experience is not given any appropriate base of support; it is only grudgingly noted, almost as an aside, but the social, community, national, and abstractly defined individual growth considerations are enthusiastically sloganized. The genuinely aesthetic demanding aspects of art are rather restricted in tone—the province of artists, perhaps—and not to be confused with developmental needs of children.

The stress is on harmony and balance—on the associational life. The well being of society is implied as the greatest good and it is believed that this may be best achieved by emphasizing the unique potential in each person. Paradoxically, however, though individuality is recognized as a basic human condition, it is the total welfare of the group that is of the greatest concern. Correspondingly, the instrumental value of the art experience as a basic learning process is implied to be its most positive attribute, while the intrinsic qualities of symbolic expression and aesthetic evaluation are sensed primarily as pragmatic influences. The wonder, joy, mystery, and pain inherent in art take on a "Cinderella syndrome."

The stress thus has been in most of contemporary ideal mass education on developing an intelligence and a personal sensitivity that is essentially useful in nature. "As for methods, the prime need of every person at present is capacity to think, the power to see problems, to relate facts to them, to use and enjoy ideas."² No one would really argue with Dewey on this point. He pinpointed a need that is always present in education and a rewarding guide for teachers to have. Learning is seen as a creative undertaking, yet it is also attuned to the characteristic American pragmatism that values the use of ideas and things as well as their elegance.

It is difficult and probably a negative gesture to criticize what are on the surface wholesome and positive educational objectives. Not only superficially, but in a more profound sense the progressive influences in art education have consistently and hopefully aimed for decent, liberal, democratic, and aesthetically worthwhile conditions and inherently satisfying as well as edifying experiences for students. This may have a more attuned and adaptive significance in the area of social studies, but it intersects unreal, or at the very least, extraneous considerations in the art area. By solemnly

² John Dewey, *Problems of Men* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1946), p. 44.

providing the aesthetic experience in education with attendant patriotic and soicological values to be realized, the actual core of artistic meaningfulness may be bypassed. By deliberately emphasizing functional interrelations of an almost self evident nature, the humanistic morality of the art experience becomes moralistic rather than an intrinsically natural, unfolding process. The responsibilities of the individual to art are rarely mentioned, the reverse being the general tenor. The need for personal integrity, for honest exploration, for free form making, for symbolic search to face pain and frustration as well as joy and achievement in the process, to gain insight, all of which makes for frequent outsize demands on individual attention and commitment, is reorganized into ordered and circumscribed sallies into the "domain of the imagination." There are the attendant pleasures, supposedly gratifying instruction and, moulded, well roundedness of students which superficially may occur. But the deep, abiding, and intrinsically significant considerations of real aesthetic experience are unwittingly sloughed off as troublesome, not amenable to structure or organization or just simply ignored, if even recognized a good part of the time.

DEWEY'S IDEAS ON AESTHETICS

This may have come about from a misreading of Dewey. In his thinking, he elevated aesthetics to one of the highest, if not the highest experience. Dewey says that "esthetic experience is experience in its integrity. Had not the term 'pure' been so often abused in philosophic literature . . . to denote something beyond experience, we might say that aesthetic experience is pure experience. For it is experience freed from the forces that impede and confuse its development as experience; freed that is from factors that subordinate an experience as it directly had to be something beyond itself. To aesthetic experience, then the philosopher must go to understand what experience is."³ This Dewey did do in his study of *Art As Experience* and the implication is that teachers should do likewise in setting up educational method. His greatest contribution, perhaps, lies in the importance he attached to aesthetics as a real experience rather than as a shadowy quality existing only in the realm of thought or as a beautiful but mindless impression on the senses. It is his approach to the very question of the analysis and uses of the symbol in artistic ways that is a parallel and equally valid contribution and the one that has most influentially oriented the direction of art education, when it has not been deflected in the course of misunderstood enthusiasm.

Dewey maintains that the arts provide opportunities to engage the whole man, that great art elicits the most vital responses and provides man with the fullest measure of experience. Experience is most realized when the emotional and sensual as well as the intellectual elements of the individual are integrated in an imaginative symbol. In its highest form this is art and as such infuses experience with meaning and vitality. We have already

³ John Dewey, *Art As Experience* (New York: Minton, Balch, 1934), p. 274

examined this idea as an aim in art education. However, Dewey also maintains that the aesthetic experience is inherent on all levels of relationship, its definition essentially reducing itself to one of empirical validation to suit the purposes and needs of the individual. The worth of the experience lies in the working relationships the individual establishes with the aesthetic object and is not either a subjective or an objective understanding other than that it happens to be either unique at the moment, or the actual stimulation for creative transformation. Consequently, the work eliciting aesthetic response, the medium of artistic transaction, is an experience in which the objective and subjective elements are integrated into a new object with aesthetic significance.

This varies from one experience to the next and is based upon prior learnings the individual has amassed and his own inherited propensities and special manner of vision. The meaning is established as it is experienced and thus art creates a satisfying condition that uniquely colors experience. This provides a quality of realization in art that permits the individual to assess his role, creating insights, catharses, and gratifications that are positive and inherently rewarding. In distinction to life's experiences which are primary and permit no relief, existing as acts beyond the control of man, art is identifiable as a human symbol which offers existence more than the exposure to the random acts of nature. Admittedly, this oversimplified and brief examination of one of Dewey's most important ideas leaves much to be desired. Too many of Dewey's adherents have misread the intent of these concepts, visualizing an empirical objectification of the aesthetic experience.

EMPIRICAL OBJECTIFICATION

This objectification is shared with contemporary psychology; most particularly, the common acceptance with the Gestalt psychologists of the fundamental human movement, in all situations, to an underlying perceptual and experiential structure of order. The tensions that are organically a part of any confrontation with experience that an individual faces are the perceptual stimulations and dissonances that must be resolved. The harmony with which this is achieved supposedly determines the specific perceptual quality as well as the extent of the growth in the individual (the new information received and its relative significance, the elegance of the reorganized configuration, the sense of propriety and rightness that results from merging the varying elements of the experience, and so on). If the utilitarian, practical considerations have outweighed other considerations, then there probably can be no aesthetic realization in the individual experience and there are only pragmatic qualities. But if there are intangible, yet intrinsic qualities of order that remain in an experience, above, beyond, or in addition to the practical, then the aesthetic element comes into play. Consequently, a farmer who enjoys the fall of rain because of the patterns it creates in the puddles is having an aesthetic experience as against the one who sees the rain primarily as a necessity for the growth of

sense, the teacher becomes a critic, guiding his students through the maze of experiential anarchy as well as through the prism of his own personality or especially that of "scientific" methodology. Personal predilection may be dangerous in this sense, distorting or limiting the experience the teacher is presenting or guiding, but on the other hand, the dogmatic or unexamined factors of a shared and "responsible" outlook may lead to similar and even more deadening results. Yet the objectification of the art experience may lead to just such a situation. Dewey himself, despite his warnings to the contrary, tends to construct a particular and personal vision and to confuse this with a normative condition. The biases and idiosyncratic distinctions that color and complete an individual personality thus confound and bewilder a mass belief that has been imposed or grafted onto its understanding. The supreme rationality and stress on empirical values that in the final analysis bend to personal vision limits Dewey's ideas on art in education and more so his uncritical followers. His commitment to vital experience, germinal and radical as it was, was spread too thinly in suggesting all of life's experiences as containing a potential aesthetic base at the same time that he narrowly defined the good and bad styles in art. Though he himself regarded art as the highest means of providing meaningful experience, he was at the same time committed to what his followers referred to as a "scientific humanism." Dewey's profound understanding could bridge the paradoxes and disturbing elements of implied contradiction, transcending the trivialities of a position by suggesting radical innovations and insisting upon new and experimental departures of meaning. As a result, there is a genuine statement of ideals that are hopeful and seemingly informed in outlook. However, the very empirical quality with its built-in aspects of evaluation is distressingly accepted on its most uninstructed level as containing the educational implementation of Dewey's idea of art as experience.

It must be recognized though because of Dewey and the growth of progressive ideas, art education has experienced a great expansion. Despite the futility of some of its conditions, the groundwork has been laid for the attempt to actualize the easily verbalized ideals. Opportunities abound for cultural and creative involvement, even if the scene is not a clear one. Though this may have degenerated at times into an empty form of self-expression (a concept that Dewey himself did not favor) the importance and the validity of the arts in education have remained a generally recognized need, though sadly or haphazardly catered to and understood in a confusing manner.

From the middle thirties on there has been a burgeoning of art expression and a spread of art education in the schools. In the wake of the vitality that the early progressive educators stimulated and in response to Dewey's philosophical pronouncements, there has been a continuing and growing amount of theorizing and implementing activity that has carried art education into most schools and conferred upon it a legitimacy in educational councils as well as providing a serious base to its own internal development.



The environment within which students create art is considered by many theorists a product of differing cultural and social forces

[ABOVE] a painting class in the Toledo Public Schools
[PHOTO Tom O'Reilly]

[BELOW] Abandoned children of Mrs Mehta's school in Bombay, India, drawing with colored chalks [UNESCO/Alaine Peskine]



[TOP RIGHT] A drawing lesson in a Russian classroom located in Moscow [UNESCO/Y Katienbargas]

[BOTTOM RIGHT] A painting class at Woodberry Down Secondary School in London [UNESCO/A Tessore]



This influence stresses the familiar visual objects, and the aesthetic experience as it is encountered in normal, average living, on the assumption that these are the realizable, active sources of value formation and it is upon such first hand factors that comparison, awareness, and growing sensitivity to art may be stimulated and developed. This attitude is very congruent to the electric flow of thinking in progressive education.

Distinctions of Artistic Commitment

A humanistic and aesthetic injection into education, however, cannot really suffice or follow its own inner logic if it is subjected to an adjustment that is essentially foreign to itself. For instance, to speak of the nature of art again: It has its own rather fluid structure; if a generalized idea of structure may even be permitted; an imposed or an implied utilitarianism distorts its form and its meaning. Unless there is an organic craftsmanship involved, as in pottery or jewelry making, there is likely to be a confusion and adulteration of values in the aesthetic experience. In art education practice though craftsmanship underlies all art teaching, there is yet a distinction between a student—a boy of fifteen, for instance, making a piece of enameled jewelry for his classmate Mary to wear (someone he likes) and a committed artist seriously working in his studio transforming his experience into profound symbolic forms. Though the student is engaged in a perfectly legitimate process, he should not be encouraged to believe that it is on the level of really serious or profound art creation. As shattering to democratic ideals as it may sound, there is an innate hierarchy of aesthetic values and a cultivation of taste requiring time and effort in art that has to be recognized if any real art experience is to be hoped for. A growing student sensitivity is fed on this reaching for more profound aesthetic meaning and personal vision as contrasted to the mere acquisition of skills or the "fun" of the process. Art education, as it has developed under the aegis of progressive thought has often leveled the distinctions, seeking and encouraging an essentially noncritical experience as an end in itself where local or arbitrary examples are the prime comparative criteria even where the aesthetic content is dubious.

Deliberate and comparatively closed research has addressed itself to evoking the experience, rarely attempting to furnish aesthetically significant criteria for the substance of the experience. The cut-and-parse procedures of an almost inviolable scientific method introduced an alien grammar into the "language of vision." The emphasis was subtly, and probably unknowingly, moved from the individual communing with himself and expressive symbolic values through creative form to one that elevated the personal and socially therapeutic qualities of the artistic process with the consequent devaluing of the worth of the object produced and a diffusion of the symbolic meaning of the creative process itself. As in the larger sphere of social and political action, egalitarianism insisted on the equality of worth and effort; the teaching process being justified in eliciting mass "creative" response. Though the individual supposedly develops a social sense of successful involvement under this gross experiential method,

in reality, there is also an atrophying of true artistic consciousness, of critical sensitivity and searching creative exploration. The norms of a practical society where artistic endeavor is ill favored seep in, especially in the absence of a teaching method that does not insist upon artistic integrity and intrinsic aesthetic values that derive their quality from the worth of the object produced as well as in the making of the object, and from profound spiritual and symbolic concerns rather than relying upon the exigent nature of much of the local visual scene. The process itself is left, dragging its anchor through all of the debris and clutter of an emerging personality, finally rusting during adolescence.

Some of the failure may be laid to Dewey himself, in his faith in scientific method as the panacea of our times. Though his own belief was not the dogmatic scientism of his followers, it provided the source that later flowered into an etiolated but enveloping plant that had excluded the vital light of basic educational substance. Yet it was the disciples of Dewey who basically skewed the thinking: experimentalism became almost an end in itself, negating the original purpose that gave it impetus—the needs of the individual child and the development of a mature freedom of understanding and responsibility in the individual in terms of authentic values. Based upon a late nineteenth-century belief in progress and in active experience as the source of meaning, empirically understood through the efficacy of science, the followers and popularizers of Dewey elevated an analytical and pragmatic intelligence as the desired individual product in education ignoring many implicit aesthetic values which Dewey later made more concrete. However, when this occurred in the 1930's progressive education had already established its own academic outlook. This intelligence, based upon the experiences it encountered, would then engage in problem solving, providing solutions that meet individual needs, but prescribed insofar as those needs reflected a social good. The philosophy was and remains enlightened and democratic in the characteristic American tradition of a free individual existing in harmony with the community *summum bonum*, for its greatest welfare. However, the essentially naive belief in scientific method was already a dated one that led to a comparatively simple but one-dimensional instrumentalism particularly in the popular but anti-intellectual ideas prevalent among many educators who resisted a real involvement with the aesthetic sense as well. The physics of Einstein and Planck and the esoteric mathematics of the twentieth century have shattered the simple pragmatic experience of a predetermined scientific method. It is no longer sufficient to assess experience in terms of simple problem solving; there are the perplexing tangents of comprehension and the seemingly random actions of physical nature that poke holes in any easily imposed fabric of meaning. There is a counterpart to this in the symbolic approach to human behavior. The relative nature of things precludes any absolute or specifically deterministic understanding. Not that Dewey was narrow in his philosophy; he always believed in viable knowledge as well as in the intrinsic and aesthetic worth of experience in addition to its utilitarianism. He advocated an exceptionally liberal approach that accepted the humani-

ties as well as science. Not the least has been the intimate relationship between culture and education that has followed on the practices of progressive education, the bringing together of art and curricular development, of the creative process and the child, in what could be fruitful learning and individual realization.

Several other individuals and groups have been prominent in this development of art education and each has had a pertinent influence in directing the aims and the methods of the area.

THE WORK OF THOMAS MUNRO

One of the most important of these individuals who went far beyond his role as curator of education of the Cleveland museum was Thomas Munro. As a quiet presence that exerted strong and fundamental pressures, Munro has examined all of the important considerations and problems in art education, pinpointing many of the channels of investigation that art education was to explore, and he has posed inherent problem considerations that have not been resolved as yet.

Munro appears to have assessed many of the implications of progressive educational thought. In posing many of the problems art educators must address themselves to, he has broadly structured the field with a Deweyan emphasis. Roughly, he points up the basic concerns such as: What is the nature of art, its forms and interrelationships? What constitutes a proper teaching method of translating artistic qualities in the classroom? How do individuals develop aesthetic sensibilities and how can art education stimulate these through creative and appreciative experiences that are translated through teaching methods? He says: "Not all the issues in art education arise from issues in the outside world of art production and consumption. Some are more indigenous to the educational realm itself. Education in youth is not now regarded merely as preparation for later life, but as a period of life that has its own intrinsic values. Deciding on the right sort of art education is not, therefore, merely a matter of deciding what sort of mature artists or art appreciators we wish to produce. Even if we knew that none of our students would become artists, and none would have access to art, there would still be reason—so much the more reason—for letting them enjoy and practice the arts in the schools. Art is coming to be recognized, in other words, as a necessary part of general education for all persons, on all age levels—necessary to the full exercise and development of personality, especially in its sensory, emotional, and imaginative aspects, and in muscular coordination."⁴

Emphasis on Rational and Psychological Research

Munro, however, is far too sophisticated and knowledgeable in art to consider the teaching of art as some life adjustment condition that could

⁴ Thomas Munro, "Introduction," *Art in American Life and Education*, 40th Yearbook National Society for the Study of Education (Bloomington, Ill.: Public School Publishing Co., 1941), p. 18

be simply generated in the laboratory of the school art room. Yet, in his rational and sensible attitude he does objectify the art experience in an extremely attractive manner. This has encouraged idealist yearnings in art education and has set one of the significant tones for art education theory since the beginning of World War II. Its balanced blend of critical examination of eclectic teaching and that of sympathetic belief in the broadly humane and personally rewarding experiences of art which are then correlated with the psychology of child development has created almost a corps of evangelical enthusiasts among art teachers. This is particularly true since the psychological studies Munro called for were forthcoming in the decades of the Forties and the Fifties and continue to do so in the Sixties. These see a sophisticated, culturally based psychology being employed in conjunction with the freedom and growth potential of artistic and creative behavior to bring art, to the individual and his society, to their mutual benefit. Munro aptly orients this outlook, for example, writing: "Art especially is a warmly personal subject, though not always so presented in schools and colleges. It is concerned directly and constantly with human individuals and groups, rather than with impersonal facts or logical abstractions. It deals with concrete experiences and their objects; with emotive sense images, aspirations, loves, and hates. The forms and activities of art can be fully understood only in the light of the motives that inspired them and the experiences they arouse. Psychology should and will illuminate these for us . . ." ⁵

Munro called for a liberal though essentially presumptive psychological understanding. This was to chart the creative process and provide research guides for the teaching-learning relationships in art understood in terms of enriching the individual's personality and the recognition of methods most attuned to successful developing of "valuable mental and bodily abilities." He felt that an organically integrated understanding could be worked out, given time, patience, and research that brought together the intrinsic nature of art, the natural unfolding of the creative process and the comprehension of personality growth and child development as it is related to art. The subsequent responsibility and capacity of education (and art being one of its basic components) would be to create balanced individuals who could better cope with the repressive forces of society.

CREATIVE AND MENTAL GROWTH

One of the most developed and organized responses to the impetus of progressive ideas coupled with psychological research was that of Viktor Lowenfeld. He organized a very structured body of knowledge centered around scholarly information regarding children's art work and its relationship to individual personality growth. What is significant may be summed up in the following paragraph from Lowenfeld:

Growth is on an everchanging continuum. Aesthetic growth appears to be the component of growth responsible for the changes from a chaos on the lower

⁵ Thomas Munro, *ibid.*, p. 249.



*The individual pupil
should be the focal
point of any
philosophy of art
education [Pitts
burgh Public
Schools, photo
Martin Hermann]*

end of the continuum to the most complete harmonious organization on the upper end. This striving for higher forms of organization does not necessarily refer to the elements of art; it may also refer to a more intense and greater integration of thinking, feeling, and perceiving and thus be responsible for our greater sensibilities in life. Indeed, one of the distinctions between the basic philosophies in art education and those in the fine arts may be a difference in emphasis regarding harmonious organizations. Art education primarily deals with the effect which art processes have on the individual, while the so-called fine arts are more concerned with the resulting products. It is then quite logical to say that art education is more interested in the effect of a greater and more harmonious organization of the elements of art on the individual and his development, while aesthetic growth in the fine arts generally refers to the harmonious organization of the elements of art themselves.⁶

This clearly separates the process from the product in art education, the former seemingly becoming the means of personality growth while the latter becomes insignificantly anticlimactic for the purposes of art education. The student's work of art is regarded as merely the concrete proof that a process has occurred. It is the process that educators have to concentrate upon. This Lowenfeld does, though paradoxically, by consistently referring to the work examples that permit him to make his analytic researches. This stress on process and growth has strong ties to the progressive ideas that value the involvement of self in action. In addition, Lowenfeld contributes an important emphasis upon the transforming nature of the creative process, wherein, the central consideration of interpreting one's own experiences in some kind of form is underscored. This he considered as basic to the role of art education and the resulting psychological structuring by age groups and by haptic or visual types he regarded as a helpful and necessary means of knowledge for the teacher that assisted in channeling and guiding proper personality development. Utilizing this developmental information on methodologies could be enacted by individual teachers that figuratively, if not literally, would ignore the aesthetics of the finished product, thus in a sense excusing the teacher from a fundamental understanding of art, if the logic is carried even not to too extreme a point. The concentration appeared to be progressively an almost clinical or case history approach with overtones of an unsophisticated "mental health" attitude. This became evident despite the sincerity and the scholarly research. As in Dewey's case there was also an adulteration of a valuable understanding by disciples.

Fallacies in Method

In separating the process from the product, particularly in their aesthetic interrelationships, Lowenfeld unwittingly created an attitude that easily valued so-called psychological insights. This made for relatively uninformed teaching analysis in art on the part of a vast horde of psychologically but superficially directed teachers who really did not comprehend the subtleties of his position. The teachers generally did not possess the necessary training to make proper classroom judgments dependent upon psychological theorems. The values of art could too easily be buried and were virtually extinguished in some instances under the guise of a methodology that relied upon pseudopsychology and what finally became for the most part, trivial experiments in therapy through art.

Despite the evident awareness of Lowenfeld to value, judgment, individual perception, and the stress on self realization, there was no accompanying intensification of the critical eye and significant aesthetic values. The outside environment, the jumble of superficial and only momentarily rewarding but actually insignificant forms may have been deplored. But there was no attempt to examine critically the culture and its frequently insidious and unconscious effect upon the individual and his tastes in and understanding of art. There was a strong reliance on the instrumentality of the art processes. "If the senses have been refined and cultivated it will